

SAINT PAULS.

NOVEMBER, 1867.

ALL FOR GREED.

CHAPTER V.

POOR MONSIEUR RICHARD'S RICHES.

THE effect produced by such a tragedy in a little place like D——, does not require to be described. For twenty miles round it spread its terror; but in the centre of action itself, it exercised a vivifying power. The collective life of D—— was quintupled. Every one's mind was busy upon the same subject, and at the same time. If a conversation began on any other topic, it was sure, before five minutes were over, to find its way round to the assassination of Martin Prévost; and, whether they who conversed were peasants or shopkeepers, you would have been equally astonished, had you overheard them, to note the extraordinary aptitude of all for the discharge of duties appertaining to the police. Each man,—and, for that matter, each woman, too,—had his or her notion about the murderer, and was the inventor of a trap in which the criminal must be infallibly caught, and which, on the part of the said inventor, proved a willingness, a depth of calculation, and an instinct of the manners and ways of crime, that, so far as the moral condition of this rural population was concerned, was not pleasant. The officers of justice only seemed gifted with true administrative dulness, and the process of "instruction," as it is called, elicited, as it dragged on its pedantic course, remarks not flattering to judicial sharpness from the public. For the public knew everything, however secret; and, above all, whatever was surrounded with unusual precautions as to secrecy. The greffier of the Juge de Paix talked to his wife; the Maire talked to his married daughter; the huissier du tribunal confided in his bonne; the doctor who had examined the body transmitted his impressions to all his patients; and all the dévotes discussed the matter with Monsieur le Curé and his Vicaire. Then the beadle, who was married to Madelon, the Maire's cook, and the sacristan, whose wife collected the money for

the chairs during divine service, and was charwoman twice a week at the private establishment of the principal grocer,—all these served as so many channels of communication, and from conduit to conduit conveyed the whole current of information from its head source in the cabinet of the *Juge d'Instruction* down to the kitchen of the humblest ménagère. But the worst of all was the brigadier de gendarmerie. This official, by name Frédéric Herrenschmidt, a gigantic Alsatian, was the devoted and pretty well avowed suitor of Madame Jean; and from “*Monsieur Frédéri*,” as she styled him, awful as he might be to the general public of D—, she contrived to extract the minutest details. Madame Jean was reputed a rich woman, and being the widow of a lazy drunkard, to whom she was married twenty-five years back, and whose backslidings she had brooded over during a twenty years’ widowhood, she had never brought herself to trust sufficiently any “man of woman born,” to resign to him the disposal of her little fortune. “*Sophie*,” as her dead master (but he alone) called her, had been the presiding genius of the *Prévost* household for a quarter of a century, and had never cheated old Martin of one sou. She made his interest hers, because he had made hers his; and by dint of placing, as he had done, here a hundred francs, and there a hundred francs of her savings during this long space of time, Madame Jean was possessed of somewhere about the sum of twenty thousand francs, and this wealth of hers was the cause that, court her as he might, she could not make up her mind to marry the gendarme. Madame Jean was a fine bold specimen of a strong-nerved French female of forty-five; but though her vanity was well developed, her caution and covetousness overtopped it. She liked to overawe the wives and maidens of D— as the sharer of the military authority of the place, and she not only tolerated, but exacted the utmost homage of *Monsieur Frédéri*; but to take him, for better or worse, was what she could not resolve to do, for she had a shrewd notion that however much a union with this stalwart son of Mars might be the better for her, it would probably be the worse for her money. So Madame Jean, who had no human being to leave her riches to, and who never spent anything, but went on saving, refused to become Madame Herrenschmidt, but reigned supreme over the soul of the brigadier, and was possessed of all the knowledge he had no business to impart.

Whatever her other faults, Madame Jean had all the helpfulness of a Frenchwoman, and, had it not been for her care and activity and sense, poor Monsieur Richard would have died, or gone mad, from the effect of his uncle’s sudden and terrible death. Richard *Prévost* was no hero,—that the reader scarcely requires to be told,—and since it was proved to him that the house he inhabited had been broken into, that an assassin had actually passed before the door of the room in which he slept, in order to creep up the stairs and enter his uncle’s room immediately over his head, the unfortunate young man seemed

possessed by the idea that the same thing might happen again any day, and that the next victim would inevitably be himself.

"You don't expect me to come and sleep in your room, do you," cried Madame Jean, hoping to rouse him by indignation, "as Prosper's wife used to do when you were a little child?"

"Certainly not, my dear Madame Jean; but I cannot help thinking that it would be a proper precaution if the brigadier were to sleep in the house."

At this Madame Jean drew herself up, as though she had been already the gendarme's lawful spouse, and told Monsieur Richard that he was ignorant of the stern obligations of *le devoir militaire*!

"Nicolas can sleep in the passage," suggested she. Nicolas was the out-door man.

"Nicolas?" was the distrustful reply.

"Well, you don't think he would let himself be killed and carried away without making a noise, do you?"

But Monsieur Richard shook his head and seemed to incline towards a totally different kind of alarm, at which Madame Jean exclaimed—"For shame! it is unchristianlike and unlawful to be suspecting everybody in that way. Why, Monsieur Richard, there's no end to that kind of thing! You'll be suspecting me, next! Poor old Prosper!—though I never liked him with his nasty underhand sulky ways—still, I do feel for him now."

"So do I," rejoined Richard; "but you cannot say I have done or said anything to incriminate him; for, strange to say, from the very first, something seemed to tell me that the man was not guilty."

"And I believe you are quite right, Monsieur Richard." And, coming nearer to him, and speaking cautiously, "I happen to know," added Madame Jean, "that there is not so much as the shadow of a proof;—nay, more—there's no ground on which you can rest even a suspicion touching Prosper Morel. I have no business to go revealing all this; but I do know it, and I go out of my direct duty to tell it you because your nerves are all jarred and out of order by this dreadful event, and it may comfort you to know that you have not had an assassin going about the house. You might get into a way of suspecting everybody. Your nerves are terribly shattered."

"Yes, they are; you are right there; but surely there has been enough to shake the nerves of a stronger man than me; and alas! I never was strong; but I am glad about poor old Prosper; as you say, he is not a pleasant person; but to be accused of such a heinous crime! Brrrr!" and he shuddered all over, "that must be fearful. Poor man! we must try and make it up to him somehow."

As the reader will have guessed, the first direction taken by the suspicions of justice was towards Prosper Morel. The man's character, the circumstance of the complaint made against him a week before by the Maire and taken up so vigorously by his employer

that his dismissal had been decided upon by the latter,—all this naturally militated against the woodcutter, and before the day of the murder was ended a mandat d'amener had been made out, and the gendarmes had arrested Prosper. They found him at his work, a good way out in the forest, and his behaviour at once introduced into Monsieur Frédéri's mind certain doubts of his culpability. It was evening when they discovered him, sitting astride upon a newly-felled tree, whose last branches he was leisurely lopping off, whilst he droned out a gloomy Breton cantique to the Holy Virgin. He was just finishing his day's work, and preparing to go home to his hut. When he perceived the gendarmes before him he saluted them civilly, and was about to gather up his tools. They seized him, before explaining to him why; but when the explanation came he was stupefied, not alarmed. The brigadier was an old hand, and had experience in criminals, and he felt instinctively that the bûcheron was not one. The man was stolidly unconscious, and his complete ignorance of what had passed was evident and undeniable. Nevertheless, he was immediately imprisoned, preventively, severely treated, harassed and worried in every possible way, examined and cross-examined, and the palpable proofs of his innocence, which seemed to increase almost hourly, were received with regret by his pursuers—but they were received. Beyond presumption, nothing pointed at Prosper in the details of the crime,—except that it must have been committed by some one who was intimately acquainted with old Prévost's habits, and with the ways of his house.

The mode of the assassination was tolerably clear. The victim must have been standing in front of his safe when the blow was dealt. The blow was dealt from behind, and with extraordinary coolness and certainty and force. Of the three medical men who were called in to visit the corpse, all were of the same opinion,—namely, that the first blow had suspended life, and that when the others were given, they were dealt merely to make assurance doubly sure. There was comparatively little blood, and what there was had flowed downwards upon the floor, after the murdered man had fallen. None had spurted out, and there were no stains on any article of furniture.

Now, as to the time at which the act was committed, that was also easy to determine; it must have been between the hours of six and ten in the morning. Old Prévost was a perfectly wound-up machine as to his habits, and never deviated from the monotonous regularity he had marked out for himself. Summer and winter, he always rose at five. At six he sat down to his bureau, and busied himself with accounts and calculations till eight. At eight he sometimes took a stroll in the garden, or even a short walk out of doors, but as often he remained in his own room. Till ten o'clock began striking it was not necessary that any one should be acquainted with the whereabouts of Martin Prévost; but when the tenth stroke had struck from

a dusty, wheezy old clock in the passage, instantly the voice of Madame Jean was to be heard calling out in a loud tone, "Monsieur, the breakfast is served."

Now, when, on that fatal Thursday, Madame Jean's voice had sent forth its regular call, nothing stirred. Madame Jean's temper was at once irritated by this piece of unpunctuality, and after three minutes had elapsed she repeated the summons. Still no answer. Madame Jean ascended the stairs, angrily opened the door of her master's room, and saw the sight we have described in our last chapter. Her screams attracted Monsieur Richard, who was in attendance in the dining parlour, awaiting his uncle's presence. The poor young man, whose nervous system was less robust than Madame Jean's, was so overcome by the ghastly scene, that he fainted dead away, and Madame Jean had to raise him as well as she could, and busy herself with recalling him to his senses. Before this was quite accomplished, she had opened a window, called Nicolas up from the stable-door in the yard below where he was attending to the old mare, and despatched him for the Juge de Paix and the Maire, and the doctor, and the all-important brigadier. As to the unhappy Monsieur Richard, between sobs, and spasms, and swoons, it was long past noon before any rational testimony could be extracted from him.

What was quickly enough realised was this small number of facts ;— Martin Prévost had been assassinated after he was dressed, and had begun his daily occupations, consequently, between the hours of seven and ten. He had been struck from behind by a heavy blunt instrument, no trace whereof could be found, and the blow had been dealt with such force that the probability was that the assassin was a man under middle age.

He had been murdered by some one entering the house from without, for the mode of entrance was discovered almost directly. At the end of the passage which divided the house, and ran from the street-door to the yard-door, there was a small room, used for putting away everything in general ; and from old boots and dirty linen on the floor, to fresh-made preserves put to set in their pots on the shelves, there was a little of everything in this chambre de débarras. It had one window opening into the yard, and a door opening into the passage. This door was seldom shut, and the window was never open. But a pane of glass had been taken out, through which a man's hand and arm could be introduced, and the window had been opened, for it was left open, and what was more, the iron bar and hasp, rusty, and liable to creak if suddenly turned, were rubbed all over with some filthy grease, found to be borrowed from pots kept by Nicolas in his tool-house for greasing cart-wheels. Through that window, then, the assassin had entered, and passing through the door into the passage, he had mounted the stairs up to Monsieur Prévost's room.

The reason of the crime was at once evident ; it lay in the desire to rob. But the safe had not been broken into, as was at first supposed. The safe had been opened, and probably by old Prévost himself.

But then, the ingress of the assassin accounted for, how about his egress ? Every fact successively discovered, pointed to the precise moment of the crime as somewhat before seven, for Nicolas had been ordered, the night before, by Martin Prévost himself, to be at the post-office by seven, punctually, to post some business letters, and thus gain several hours by taking advantage of what was called the night post, instead of waiting for the day post, which only went out at three. He had gone out at half-past six, and was found not to have returned much before eight. Madame Jean had gone, as she frequently did, to six o'clock mass, and, as she also frequently did, had passed from the church into the sacristy, and had a bout of conversation with the Vicaire, and she was certain of having returned shortly after half-past seven.

In one hour, then, between half-past six and half-past seven, had the deed been done, for the house was deserted then, and young Monsieur Richard fast asleep, for he slept late at all times, and, especially since his illness, he scarcely ever woke before half-past eight or nine.

But next came the question of escape. How, at that hour, had the murderer escaped ? The court-yard, being paved, yielded no trace of a footprint, but in the garden beyond there were some traces of a boot or shoe very different from any that could be matched by the foot of any body in or around the house. These traces were lost at a hedge, then found again in a field beyond, then utterly lost on the banks of the river close to the Cholet high road.

Nothing in all this, as the reader will see, squared the least with the notion of Prosper Morel as the murderer. Still the fact remained of his master having turned him off, and of his having been heard to threaten his master. In this, however, Monsieur Richard was at once his best and worst witness ; for, though he could not deny the threat made by Prosper in his presence, yet, aided by Madame Jean, he had been the means of bringing him back into his uncle's service, if not favour ; and Madame Jean deposed that Prosper's gratitude to all, and, above all, to his master, for giving him another chance, was loud, deep, and sincere. So said Monsieur le Curé, who had been instructed to admonish Prosper, and who had been, he said, edified by the man's behaviour on that occasion.

Notwithstanding all this, Prosper Morel was kept preventively in prison, and having no other presumable culprit under its claw, French law gave itself its habitual delight in torturing, as much as possible, the one it had caught. However, even French law has a limit to its harshness and narrow-mindedness, and without one single shadow of a proof, Prosper's detention could not last. The man's behaviour in

prison was irreproachable. He was mostly silent, and absorbed in the study of a well-thumbed book of prayers. When not silent, he either sang his Breton cantiques or prayed aloud for the soul of his murdered master. None of his guardians liked him, but there were not two opinions about his innocence. Besides, to his credit be it spoken, Monsieur Richard, so soon as the first shattering effect of the crime had a little worn off, did everything in his power to come to the bûcheron's aid ; and when each succeeding examination by the Juge d'Instruction brought forth the increased certainty of the crime having been committed by some one from without, whose identity could not by any means be brought to tally with that of the woodcutter, why, the woodcutter had to be released. So one fine day old Prosper went back to his hut, and recommenced his avocations. But so repellent was the man's nature, that the having been a victim to a false accusation did not make him interesting. His innocence was proved beyond all doubt, yet people shunned him as before, and he led a solitary life up in his woods.

The sum of ready money stolen was found, as nearly as any retrospective calculation could be made, to amount to about fifteen thousand francs—five thousand and odd hundreds in gold and silver, and the rest in notes. The numbers of all the notes had not apparently been taken, although in a little side drawer of Martin Prévost's bureau-table was found, with the date of 8th October written on it, a slip of paper on which were marked down the numbers of three 1,000-franc notes and of two 500-franc ones. Of course the necessary measures were immediately taken to stop these notes, but of the others no trace could be obtained.

Two weeks passed over, and certainly no effort was spared. Officials came from neighbouring towns, and the Préfet of the Chef Lieu du Département wrote to Paris and came himself to D——, and a great stir was made ; but the mystery never allowed one corner of its veil to be lifted. There were examples of such mysteries in the judicial history of France, and the Prévost murder was destined to be a fresh one added to the list.

The person who did really create a lively and sincere interest everywhere, was poor Monsieur Richard. For many miles round he was talked of and lamented over ; and particularly when it was known how very rich he was, his neighbours fell into the habit of calling him, quite affectionately, “ce pauvre Monsieur Richard.”

Of a truth, when old Prévost's affairs came to be looked into, it was a matter for universal surprise to see how rich he had become. He had, for the last twenty or thirty years, conducted his financial business through men who did not know or communicate with each other. But at his death the accounts of all were forthcoming, and the Cholet notary and a Paris notary, a Paris stockbroker and a Paris banker, all produced their books, and old Prévost was found to be

possessed of double and treble the property, in various securities, that had ever been supposed. Between land and floating investments, his fortune amounted to near upon three millions five hundred thousand francs! Bundles of railway obligations there were, for instance, on such lines as the Orleans and St. Germain, which had never been touched since their creation, and which had more than doubled.

Poor Monsieur Richard! It certainly diminished no one's interest in him when the notary at D—— produced Martin Prévost's will, by which, subject only to one or two small charges,—such as a provision for Madame Jean, who did not need it!—he left everything he possessed to his nephew. Richard Prévost's income was not far under one hundred and seventy thousand francs a year!

"Indeed, sir," said the notary at D——, "your poor uncle was more attached to you than any one knows besides myself."

"And even you do not know what I lose in losing him," answered the young man. And his last interview with his uncle seemed to have so deeply impressed him as to have almost cured him of his admiration for Mademoiselle Félicie

CHAPTER VI.

THE LOVERS.

If the reader has not forgotten Monsieur le Vicomte's application to Martin Prévost touching the mortgage or sale of *Les Grandes Bruyères*, he will readily understand the singular embarrassment in which Monsieur le Vicomte found himself placed when, instead of a living money-lender, he suddenly confronted the corpse of a murdered man. Things had reached a point when any retrograde steps would be likely to provoke a "scandal," as provincial news-hawkers term it; and were Félicie's marriage with Monsieur de Champmorin to be definitely broken off, she might at once resign herself to the blessings of spinsterhood, for she had few or no "extraordinary resources," as Finance Ministers, in the face of a deficit, term it, to fall back upon. Félicie had got just now her one chance in hand. She would hardly get another. How should she? She could not be taken about to watering-places,—there was no money for that sort of thing,—and she could not even achieve a visit to Paris; for, besides the pecuniary question, she had no relation there who would take notice of her unmarried, or help her to get a husband! No; if any unlucky circumstance prevented Mademoiselle Félicie from becoming Madame de Champmorin, she would simply fall back upon her father's hands, or she would have to make a mésalliance, and even of that—frightful as it was!—what likelihood was there in such an out-of-the-way place as D——?

It was altogether a dismal look-out, and such Monsieur le Vicomte felt it to be. Of course a man, even so hard pressed as he was, could

not, for decency's sake, attempt to force on the discussion of his private affairs at the moment of so shocking a catastrophe as that of old Prévost's death. So he was obliged to wait and postpone the settlement with Monsieur de Champmorin's notary, under no matter what pretext. And this was not altogether easy. In France, when a marriage is being negotiated, the two persons who are to be joined together and made one can only, till that junction be operated, be fitly described as "hostile parties." Those who act for them pass their lives in the exercise of the cunningest strategy, and to have "out-maneuvred the enemy" is glorious. True! it is a game of "who wins loses," for if the victory be gained the husband or wife may be lost.

Now, if the Champmorin general attained to a full discovery of what had passed in the Vérancour camp, he would, undoubtedly, raise his own reputation for sharpness and address, and be confided in largely by the fathers and mothers around, but he would cost his client a well-born, strictly brought up, and very charming wife. Vérancour père knew that that consideration was a secondary one, and he did not disguise to himself the danger. Having explained, as well as he could, to his adversary that his own and his father's business had always been managed by Martin Prévost, and that after the latter's retirement from his office he had preferred his advice to that of the notary who was his official successor, Monsieur le Vicomte contrived to obtain a respite from his future son-in-law's representative, and set to work to make the most he could of old Prévost's heir.

There was no kindness, no attention, that was not shown by the inmates of the Château to poor Monsieur Richard; and, though the quality of these advances was still of a patronising sort, yet they were very soothing to the unhappy young man, and he gladly accepted them; so that, by degrees, half his time came to be spent at the Château. He never grew to feel at home with this family, but the intercourse with them was pleasant, and took him out of himself.

With regard to Mademoiselle Félicie, there was assuredly a strange revulsion of feeling in young Prévost's heart and mind. You would have thought that she frightened him, and for the first few days of his intimacy, if such it can be called, at the Château, he almost seemed to shrink from her. Vévette, with her sweet gentle ways, her simple piety, and her instinct of consolation, attracted Richard at the outset far more than the fascinating Félicie, who had, as we know, before the recent tragedy, made such an impression upon him. But this did not last; and the nephew of the deceased usurer and that born Sœur de Charité, Vévette, were, even when taken together, no match for Monsieur de Vérancour's eldest daughter. Before three weeks were past, Monsieur Richard was hopelessly secured, manacled, and cast down enchain'd at the feet of his fair enslaver, and whilst

he regarded his very adoration,—mute though it was,—as presumptuous, it would have been hard to say whether she condescended even to notice that she had inspired it.

The two sisters were very different; differing in beauty as in character and mind. Félicie was just nineteen, her younger sister seventeen and a half. They were in every respect two nearly perfect types of French womanhood,—of those two great divisions of the female sex in France, neither of which do we Englishmen ever thoroughly understand. The elder girl was a true representative of the by far larger class, which, from Diane de Poitiers down to Madame Tallien or to Madame Récamier, through all the Chevreuses, Montespans, and Pompadours of three centuries, has borne haughtily in hand the banner of feminine courage, activity, and intelligence, and gone unloving through history. The younger one personified that infinitely rarer order of women, humble and heroic at once, who from Jeanne d'Arc to Louise de la Vallière, worship the ideal, and accept martyrdom as a fitting punishment for having loved.

There is the one characteristic common to the two classes;—both believe love to be an evil, a thing unholy, and in the negation whereof lies true sanctity. Only, whilst the one side achieves the triumph easily, and puts heart and soul into ambition and intellectual pursuits, the other side yields to the conqueror, and accepts wretchedness and death as the fitting penance for having loved. Much of all this is owing to the social constitution of France, somewhat more to the influence of the clergy and their curious interpretation of Catholic doctrines, but most of all to the conventional and physically ascetic education of well-born women. But for the pivot round which all social relations revolve in France, and on which depend all her immoralities, and a vast deal of her intellectual greatness, you need look no further than to the condemnation of love, held to as a principle by all Frenchwomen,—by those who act up to, as well as by those who are faithless to it.

Félicie de Vérancour was the very incarnation of what is called a superior woman in France. She had latent in her all that might make one of the most famous of her kind. Self-possessed she was, proud, firm, and a slave to what she believed was duty. Such women are, in France, extolled as high-principled because they are exempt from all passion. Their worst feature is, that they do nothing save upon calculation; their best, that they really are superior to every circumstance. It is not in the power of poverty or misfortune, or even of death itself, to humble, or shake, or extinguish the spirit of a lady in France. This it is which wins for them, often wrongfully, their fame for devotedness. Nine-tenths are devoted to their high idea of themselves,—which may stand instead of a virtue. The tenth portion is devotion itself; but the motive for the devotion is to be found in the idea of expiation. They have loved! Therefore they must expiate.

Félicie was the perfection of the modern beauty of France ;—small, delicate, graceful, refined ; every movement, every look, was feline ; and, once in her atmosphere, you were magnetised. She occupied and attracted you incessantly, raised all your curiosity, and never for one instant satisfied it.

As to Vévette—; but she is too well known to be portrayed. All nations and all ages know her. Italy calls her Juliet, Germany Gretchen ; we in England cannot name her, for she is legion ; in France only is she rare, for she is out of the social groove, and lives, however innocent or pure she may happen to be, in a perpetual state of terror and humiliation at the notion of her sin.

Well ! October was drawing to its close, and there seeming to be no chance of the gloomy mystery being fathomed, the Prévost murder had ceased to be the sole preoccupation of the public mind at D—.

The weather was magnificent for the season, and, in exchange for Monsieur de Vérancour's attention to him, Richard Prévost gave the Vicomte permission to shoot over every acre of his land, of which permission the Vicomte profited to the utmost extent. Félicie's dominion over the poor young man had reached such a height that he had ceased having any over himself. He belonged to Félicie. And yet, if you had studied him well, you must have come to the conclusion that Monsieur Richard was not “in love.”

One evening, towards the end of the month, Vévette was descending the little, narrow, stony path, leading from the parish church of D— to a side entrance into the gardens of the Château. She had a prayer-book in her hand.

As she turned a corner of the old wall, and thus was completely hidden from the side of the town, some one came from behind the bushes which skirted the path towards the open country, and a voice said, almost in a whisper, “Vévette !”

The girl stopped, and turning pale, “Oh ! how you frightened me, Raoul !” she said, clasping her prayer-book close upon her breast with both hands.

“Frightened you, Vévette !” was the rejoinder, in a tone of more sadness than reproach. “Alarm is not the feeling I wish to inspire, but I must speak to you, dearest ; I must indeed.”

Vévette trembled, and looked thoroughly scared. “At this hour,” she objected, “and so near the house. It is too dangerous ! Suppose any one should see us. Good heavens, Raoul, how did you come ? why did you come here ?”

“Vévette, dearest !” was the answer, in a gentle tone, “I came here on foot from Mollignon, across the fields, and I came here because I tell you again that I must see you. I calculated that, as this was Saturday, you would certainly be going to confession at your usual hour, and that as you came home I could meet you ;

but you are coming back an hour earlier than usual,—has anything happened?"

"Yes," replied she; "Monsieur le Curé has been sent for to administer poor old Gaynard, the blacksmith, who is dying, and he can only be in the confessional this evening."

The young man came close to the trembling girl, and took one of her hands in his, which apparently increased her alarm tenfold. "Vévette," pleaded he, tenderly, "we have a whole hour to ourselves. You will not be expected home before six, and it has not yet struck five. Now listen to me, darling;" and he drew closer to her side; "there may be a certain danger in talking here, as we are now doing; it is not likely that any one will pass this way, which leads only from your gate to the church,—still it is within possibility; there will be no danger at all if you will come down as far as the Pavilion, and let me go in there with you."

The girl shuddered. "Into the Pavilion, Raoul?" she exclaimed. "Why what would become of us, if—;" she hesitated. "What would happen supposing my father—"

"Where is your father?" interrupted Raoul.

"Out shooting in the woods belonging to La Grande Ferme."

"Oh! his new friend, Monsieur Richard's woods," observed he with a smile. "And Félicie?"

"Félicie is at home, hard at work at the altar carpet we are to give Monsieur le Curé at All Saints'."

"And, rely upon it, Monsieur Richard is in attendance upon her," added the young man, with an expression of bitter disdain. "I should not be permitted to be alone with either of you for two minutes; but that bourgeois-millionnaire may pay his court at all hours."

"For shame, Raoul," retorted Vévette. "He has gone through such an awful trial; and besides, poor Monsieur Richard, he is of no consequence!"

During this little parley, Raoul had managed to obtain undisputed possession of Vévette's hand, and in the end he also persuaded her to come with him into what he called the Pavilion.

This was no other than a kind of garden-house built into the wall of the old rampart. It lay immediately under the terrace on which, some days since, we saw the two sisters sitting at work, and was entered by a glass door, which opened upon a narrow path of the kitchen-garden. A small gate in the wall gave ingress from the lane into the garden, and of this gate Vévette kept the key; for it was through it she let herself out and in, when she went to the church or the presbytère. The only occasions on which Vévette or her sister ever moved about alone were these. The church and presbytère had originally been dependencies of the Château, and the small number of servants in the Vérancour household made it convenient that some-

times the young ladies should venture unattended from their own garden-gate to the sacristy-door.

In the interior of the Pavilion there were two rooms; one rather large, the other a mere dark closet, at the back, without a window.

When the pair had entered and closed the glass door, the young man threw off his hat, and raising Vévette's hand to his lips, kissed it silently, and with a sort of grave rapture. She laid her prayer-book down.

What a handsome pair they were. She all grace, and softness, and tenderness, and humility; and he all fire and energy, and made, as it seemed, to protect her. Vévette was the first to speak. He appeared to have forgotten why they were there.

"Raoul," said she, "why have you forced me to come here? What have you to say to me?"

Holding her hand, which he took from his lips, in one of his, he, with the other arm, encircled her waist, and pressed her to him fondly. Her head just reached his chin, and as he bent down towards her, he could not choose but kiss her beautiful fair hair; but he did so reverently.

"Don't tremble so, my own," murmured he, almost inaudibly,—for she quivered like a leaf. "You do not, you cannot fear me," and he drew her still closer to him.

Vévette was all pallor, and then again all one blush, and panting with terror and emotion. "What will become of us!" she cried; and with a sudden, childlike impulse, she hid her face upon her lover's shoulder, and burst into tears.

Gently as a mother stills her babe did Raoul strive to calm and pacify Vévette. "My very own," said he, when the first paroxysm was over, "if you will follow my counsels, and if you can rely upon yourself, all will come right. Only answer me two questions, Do you love me, Vévette?" and as he uttered the words, he looked at her with his whole soul in his eyes. She gave no reply in words, but as her eyes sank before his, she again hid her face on his breast, and a tremor, a kind of electric vibration, passed over her frame.

"Well, then," resumed Raoul, apparently satisfied, "will you consent to be bargained away to some man you cannot love, as your sister will be? Will you betray and destroy me, out of weakness?"

Vévette turned round and looked imploringly at her lover. "What am I to do, Raoul?" she pleaded. "Obedience to my father is my most sacred, my first duty."

"No, Vévette, it is not so," interrupted Raoul firmly. "Truth to me is now your first duty. You have given me your heart and soul, and you must be true to me, or be unworthy."

"Oh! Raoul, Raoul!" wept the agonised girl, "there is my sin; and for that sin we shall both suffer."

"Vévette, there is your virtue, and virtue is strength. Our love can save us, but it must be strong. We are going to be separated,"—this was uttered with a visible effort. "Don't be alarmed, my sweet one; there is no separation between those who really love. We shall be nearer to each other when I am in Paris and you here, than you and any of those who are side by side with you will be. I am not afraid of the trial, Vévette, and therefore you need not be so. My father sends me to Paris to enter the offices of the Ministère de la Marine as an unpaid clerk,—the interest of my uncle the Admiral has achieved this enviable position,—but that is merely the beginning. I have another plan. I will make my own career for myself."

"Raoul!" interrupted Vévette, aghast at her lover's boldness. "And your father?"

"My father will in the end approve, because he will be unable to help himself, for I will distinguish myself and bring fresh honour to his name. But that is all a matter of mere detail, and we have not time for it now; the one thing of importance to us is, to be sure of each other. We are very soon to be parted, darling. Will you wait for me, and will you one day be my wife?"

Vévette's look of mute despair told the entire tale of her mistaken education.

"Will you promise me," continued Raoul, compassionately, "to withstand all attempts to marry you to any one else."

"Raoul!" exclaimed she with energy, and as though illuminated by a sudden inspiration, "I will promise you to take the veil rather than marry any one else. That I can do, and that I will do."

"Poor child!" rejoined her lover gravely; "and so work out the misery and death of both yourself and me. And this is what they call religious teaching! Now listen to me, Vévette," and he put both his arms round her.

"Hush!" whispered she, breaking from him hurriedly; "there is some one coming down the path this way; we are lost!"

"Be calm, Vévette," said Raoul, with authority; "I will hide myself there in the dark closet. Open the door directly; meet whoever it is with assurance, and try to draw them away from the Pavilion!"

Vévette obeyed mechanically; took up her garden hat, opened the glass door, and found herself face to face with Richard Prévost.

"Good evening, Mademoiselle Geneviève," said he respectfully. "You are just returned from church, I see. I was going out this way, up the steep path, because I have some one to see on the Place de l'Eglise, and it is much nearer;" and he went towards the gate in the wall.

Raoul had the key in his pocket. He had shut it and locked it on the inside. What was to be done? Vérette's confusion was luckily somewhat concealed by her large, overhanging straw hat, and Monsieur Richard was never supposed to be very sharp. She stammered something about the key being lost, and in fact said at last that she had

lost it, and was afraid she should be scolded. "It is no matter at all," replied blandly Monsieur Richard, "we can go round. But I thought you always went that way. I thought you came just now from that gate into the Pavilion."

"I had come all the way round, but had some seeds I wanted to look for in the garden-house," she answered, trembling with fear.

"Oh! I beg your pardon a thousand times," said Monsieur Richard humbly. "I am afraid I have disturbed you."

They went back together towards the Château, and Vévette let Monsieur Richard out by another gate, and then went into the house herself, calm externally, but internally convulsed with dread.

Had Monsieur Richard seen anything, or heard voices? What did he guess? What did he know?

That evening the sisters went together to the church, and close behind the sacristy-door Vévette perceived Raoul. When they went out, Vévette followed Félicie. "All is safe," whispered a voice in her ear as she passed, and a key was put into her hand under her cloak. Félicie had seen nothing.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VICOMTE'S TROUBLES.

IT was within two days of All-Saints' day, when Monsieur le Vicomte went up just after breakfast-time to pay a visit to his new friend and protégé, as he thought him.

Madame Jean received him with affability. She had grown gracious in her demeanour towards the "Son of the Crusaders;" for, in the first place, the tragical death of her old master had considerably softened her, and in the next she relented towards these ci-devants, —useless and obstructive as they seemed to her,—because their conduct to her young master touched her.

She shook her head, with a sigh, in answer to Monsieur de Vérancour's inquiries at the door. "Ah!" said she, "we are none of us the same since then. We shall be a long while before we get over it; and as for poor Monsieur Richard, he really ought to be persuaded to go away for a short time. He never was strong, but he is wasting away now. He ought to change the air. He wants change of scene, change of everything. He's in a bad way." And with another mournful shake of the head, she ushered the Vicomte into Monsieur Richard's presence.

It was not the room that had formerly been old Prévost's, nor even that immediately under it, which his nephew had been used to inhabit. It was the salon de compagnie, as provincials term it, which Monsieur Richard had caused to be arranged as a kind of study, and out of which he rarely went.

When the Vicomte entered, Richard Prévost came forward, eagerly, to meet him, and when they were seated he began the conversation. "Has the shooting been satisfactory?" he asked. "I have done my best, and have told the garde at the Grande Ferme to keep a sharp look-out; but it is hard in these parts not to share one's game with all the ne'er-do-wells of the department."

"Well, yesterday I tried the woods up there," rejoined Monsieur de Vérancour, pointing in the direction of the hill behind the town. "In the way of hares and chevreuils there's something to be done certainly."

"Ah!" remarked Richard; "in the high timber? yes; and if I dared put old Prosper Morel at your orders, you might have excellent sport. Never was there such a traqueur as that man in the world. But then, you see, I daren't trust him with a gun;—you know he was complained of in my uncle's time;—the instinct is too strong for him. We were obliged even to have his permit taken from him. I daren't give you Prosper."

"Well," answered the Vicomte, in a musing manner, "I saw the poor old fellow yesterday up in the woods yonder, and he looks to me terribly altered. I can't help thinking those few days' imprisonment, and the examinations and suspicions, and all together, were too much for him. He stares at you in such a strange way, and is more absent than ever. He has quite a moon-struck air."

"Poor man, poor man!" exclaimed Monsieur Richard. "I do not know how to compensate to him for all he went through. In my poor uncle's time he used to be down here every two days, at least; now he scarcely comes at all. Poor old Prosper!"

The conversation dropped, and it was evident that Monsieur le Vicomte had not paid Richard Prévost this matutinal visit merely to converse about the wrongs of the Breton woodcutter. After a pause of a few seconds, he began upon the matter which was occupying all his mind. "You have perhaps not yet had time to look for the acts I hinted at the other day," said he, in the most propitiatory tone he could assume.

Richard Prévost looked as though he had dropped from the clouds. The Vicomte grew more insinuating still.

"I mean the deeds of transfer your lamented uncle had been so good as to prepare," added he, with a smile wherein the deepest sympathy was meant to be allied to the most gracious condescension. "Alas! the papers were all to have been signed on the very day on which——" And here Monsieur de Vérancour cut his narration short with an appropriate shudder.

"I remember now," replied Richard. "You allude to the papers concerning the sale of *Les Grandes Bruyères*." The Vicomte nodded assent. "I must beg for forgiveness; but I have only once had the courage to go up there again,—into that dreadful room. I have only once looked into my poor uncle's papers, and I found nothing there."

"Yes! in truth it must be dreadful;—dreadful!" rejoined Monsieur le Vicomte, whose self-interest was waxing warm, and who hardly knew how to come to his point. "Dreadful! shattering to the nervous system; but we must be men,—my poor Monsieur Richard! —we must be men!"

Monsieur Richard sighed. "My poor dear uncle had agreed, I think you told me, to purchase *Les Grandes Bruyères*," he began, with an apparent effort.

"For the sum of seventy thousand francs paid down," replied Monsieur de Vérancour. "They were to have been paid into my hands on the fourteenth of this month,—on the day of the murder."

Monsieur Richard turned pale, and for a moment closed his eyes. Then, languidly, he drawled out the poor excuse which he had to offer. "It must seem deplorably weak to you," he said, "but to enter that room turns me sick. I have tried, and I am not equal to it. You see I have even left what had been my own room since I was a boy. I instinctively fly from all that recalls the horrible, horrible event!" Another pause. "My poor uncle, then, had almost bought the property," he added, half speaking to himself.

"Almost!" echoed Monsieur de Vérancour. "Quite! He had quite bought it. The formal engagement was taken. It was binding——"

"Not in law," interrupted Richard meekly.

"Perhaps not; but in honour," retorted Vérancour, becoming desperate.

"Let us say in friendship," suggested Monsieur Richard. "Can you,—will you confide in me as in my poor uncle, and let me know why the immediate sale of the property was so desirable?"

The Vicomte hesitated, and probably the "inward man" made a wry face; but the outward one had to make the best of it, for what else was there to do? So he told him all.

Monsieur Richard listened with the deepest, most respectful, attention to the story of which it apparently suited him to appear ignorant; and when the tale was ended, he rubbed his forehead repeatedly with his hand, and seemed a prey to some hopeless perplexity.

"So that if the property is not purchased within a given time," he began, "there might result a positive inconvenience,—a kind of obstacle,—to the establishment of Mademoiselle Félicie."

"A kind of obstacle!" echoed the Vicomte; "why, it would be ruin, my dear Monsieur,—ruin to us all; for such a parti as Monsieur de Champmorin is not to be found readily in the provinces."

Monsieur de Vérancour, like a great many people in his position, became pressing the moment he had ceased to be supercilious and disdainful, and he was on the verge of becoming importunate. Now that he had been forced into confiding in Monsieur Richard, it did seem to him so tremendous a fact that a daughter of the house of Vérancour should be placed in a dilemma out of which this low-born,

money-lending bourgeois could extricate her, that he thought by the mere statement of the case to overwhelm that individual and secure his services to an unlimited extent.

When the Vicomte made the hurried and vehement admission of his embarrassment, a flush stole over Monsieur Richard's cheek, and a light shot from beneath his eyelids; but he concealed both by his hand on which he leant.

"I could hardly have believed," he said, slowly, and with an expression of sorrow, "that any event, coming immediately after the dreadful catastrophe which has so shaken me, could give me such intense pain; but indeed, Monsieur le Vicomte, your statement makes me miserable beyond words. Do you require me to say that my devotion to your family is without bounds? Obscure as I am, I may be allowed to express my gratitude. Your kindness to me since my misfortune has made me your slave. I would give my life to serve any of you." The Vicomte looked benignly upon his inferior, and seemed to accept his sacrifice with indulgence. "But," continued Richard Prévost, "it is out of my power to do anything."

"How out of your power?" retorted the Vicomte, forgetful of everything save his own needs. "Surely you can keep your uncle's engagement?"

"Perhaps at some later date," replied Monsieur Richard, "It would pain me too much to say no!—perhaps later;—perhaps when I see clear in my own affairs. You see times are bad just now;—the financial crisis lasts still, and I cannot sell. All the ready money has been carried away, as you know, by the robbery; and I am myself in difficulties, for I am concluding the arrangements for the purchase of the Chateaubréville estate; and,—to you I will avow it,—I do not know how to obtain what is wanted for the first payment, because, as I said before, all securities are so depreciated, that if I sell, I must be a heavy loser. However, later;—in a month or two—"

"Good God!" exclaimed the Vicomte, rudely, "in a month or two all will be over! Unless I can get the money within a fortnight Champmorin will be off! His notary is a sharp fellow, and will soon find out how the land really lies. And once this chance gone, where is Félicie to find a husband? I wish you would tell me!"

"Oh! Monsieur le Vicomte!" answered Richard, bowing low, "it is not for such as me to point out that;—but assuredly so accomplished a young lady, so admirable a person as Mademoiselle Félicie, and of so illustrious a race, can only have to choose."

"Bah!" retorted Monsieur de Vérancour; "no perfections are worth a centime! And in the pit of ignominy into which we have sunk, gold only is powerful. The noblesse deserts itself, the historical names sell themselves to the highest bidders, and take the mothers of their future sons from the gutter, so there be money to be got! I tell

you Félicie has no chance. She must live to be a beggarly old maid, if she can't marry Champmorin!" And then Monsieur le Vicomte fell to wheedling his opponent, and called him his "dear Monsieur Richard," and expressed his conviction that he would help him out of his difficulties in consideration of the friendship they bore him.

When Monsieur de Vérancour took leave of Richard Prévost the latter had promised to try and borrow the seventy thousand francs, but he laid stress on the word "try," for he said the operation would be difficult.

The Vicomte was no sooner gone than Monsieur Richard opened a drawer in the table near which he was sitting, and drew out a large leather portfolio full of papers. After turning over several of them, he stopped at one, and looked at it a long while. It was the deed of sale of *Les Grandes Bruyères*, drawn up by old Martin Prévost.

Monsieur Richard spelt and weighed every word, and then at last took it up and examined it closely. In so doing, another sheet of paper adhered to it, and from between the folds a half-open letter dropped upon the ground. When Richard Prévost had sufficiently examined the deed, he replaced it in the portfolio, then stooped, picked up the fallen letter, and was about to replace it too; but something in it arrested his attention, and he opened and read it; it was as follows:—

"MY DEAR MONSIEUR PRÉVOST,

"I dare not go to you, for fear my father should hear of it and have some suspicion, and my father must not know of what I am about to ask. You once told me, when I was only a boy, that if ever I needed help I must apply to you. I do so now. I am in absolute need of the sum of two thousand francs. I have no means of getting it,—and if I do not get it, I no longer care for life! My future, my happiness, everything hangs upon this, to you, so trifling a sum, and a week hence will be too late! Do not let me ask in vain. I have believed in your words, I have relied upon you, I have no other resource. For the sake of the gratitude they say your mother once owed to mine, help me now.

"Yours devotedly,

"RAOUL DE MORVILLE."

Richard grew pale and red alternately, as he read and re-read this letter, and when he saw the date, the 7th of October, he muttered to himself, "Just a week before the day! Oh! my God, my God! what is this!" and crumpling the letter up in one of his hands, he sank back upon his chair, and leaned his head upon the table before him.

THE NEW ELECTORS;
OR,
PROBABLE EFFECTS OF THE REFORM BILL ON THE STRENGTH
OF PARTIES.

BEFORE this paper is in the hands of our readers, the Edinburgh banquet will have afforded Mr. Disraeli an excellent opportunity for a fresh exposition of the results which he expects from his memorable achievements in respect of Reform. Mr. Disraeli is seldom seen to greater advantage than when he fills the post of the honoured guest at a grand political entertainment. Stately in language, fully prepared for the necessary amount of colouring and exaggeration, ready with epigrams of the most trenchant style, yet withal allowing a flavour of gay, but not inappropriate, persiflage to pervade his most serious passages, he allows his audience on such occasions a much better insight into his mind, and into his mode of viewing things and men, than when he speaks as the inscrutable leader of the House of Commons. And lately his extra-parliamentary utterances have possessed an additional attraction. Within the walls of the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli deemed it necessary, throughout last session, to drop the character of a party-man. He assumed an attitude studiously neutral, constantly impressing on the House the absolute duty and necessity of settling Reform without respect to party considerations, and he only burst forth into his old style of fierce invective when any movement on the part of the liberal leaders appeared to infringe the rule that all party warfare was to cease for the nonce. But still the Tories had to be reassured,—especially those out of doors, who, free from the discipline which kept the parliamentary party together, wanted to know how household suffrage was to be reconciled with Tory principles. And so, out of the House, Mr. Disraeli indemnified his friends for his reticence within. His party speeches out of doors gave the cue which his puzzled followers so urgently wanted, as to the line to be taken in explaining to Tory constituencies the scope of the Bill. Toryism, they were told, might henceforth rely for the defence of our existing institutions on the conservative instincts of borough householders below the seven-pound line! As far as we can judge from outward appearances, the theory has been accepted by those to whom it was addressed, if not as a profound conviction, yet as an article of faith. But a commentary is still sadly wanting to enable conservative

orators to expatiate upon the text. The speeches made at agricultural gatherings have thus far thrown but little light upon this abstruse proposition ; and it would be indeed disappointing if the banquet at Edinburgh should be allowed to pass by without the real nature and actual scope of the Conservatism of the masses having been fully explained by the eminent political explorer who discovered the fact of its existence.

What the country, above all things, desires to know is, the view which will be taken by the majority of the new electors, not of forms of government, laws, &c., which no one thinks of repealing or attacking, but of institutions and arrangements which have been subjected to, or are likely to be subjected to, actual attack, and which are professedly repugnant to different sections of the liberal or Radical party. It is of little practical account to assert vaguely that the new electors will be attached to the throne and to the existing forms of government. No unprejudiced person doubts the loyalty to the throne of all classes of the community. Isolated workshops may, for aught we know, have republican sympathies, and a few fanatics, without any influence, may possibly, here and there, indulge in violent nonsense. But to talk of loyalty to the throne as distinguishing one class more than another is either mere pompous bombast or insincere innuendo. As to the House of Lords, it may be true that the bulk of the poorer population may feel greater traditional reverence for this branch of the legislature than skilled artisans ; and we are not sure that if the conventional phrases of attachment to our existing institutions, and so forth, as used at conservative banquets, were translated into every-day language, and stripped of their rhetorical accessories, they would not be found simply to mean that householders below the seven-pound line have more confidence in the aristocracy, and will be inclined to leave more power in their hands, than might be the case with the flower of the working classes. If we further grant that such a bias in favour of lords must necessarily redound to the advantage of Tories, it may perhaps be correct to say that the Conservatives will have a start with a large mass of the new electors, which they would not have had with the more limited number of skilled artisans. But will they have more than a start, and is this vague feeling of respect for aristocratical influence, if it really exists, equivalent to conservative instincts ? Above all, will the new electors look more to forms of government, or to laws which are the results of those forms ? To the machinery by which measures are produced, or to the measures themselves ? Can there be a doubt that whatever the sentiments may be with which they regard the House of Lords, or any other part of our Constitution, they will be influenced in their choice of representatives much more by the course which these representatives are likely to take as to practical laws affecting the well-being or touching the prejudices of those

who elect them, than by views as to abstract questions which are not at all likely to assume a practical form. The Conservatives possibly rely on being able to raise an alarm that our present forms of government are in danger, or at all events that they are safer while Tories are in power and command a majority, than if Liberals were at the helm. But even if we assume that the Conservatives might succeed in persuading a portion of the new electors that this was the case, can they hope to command ascendancy by promising to defend the Constitution which nobody attacks, if, on scores of questions deeply affecting the sentiments, the prejudices, and interests of the working classes, they find themselves unable to sympathise with the popular demands? For our own part, if we look to the political and social questions which are likely to arise, and to the part which, as far as opportunities for forming an opinion have been given, the poorer classes have taken with regard to them while unenfranchised, we confess we are at a loss to discover in what material respect the power of the Tory party, in the sense which Tories have hitherto assigned to their own name, is to be increased by Lord Derby's Reform Bill.

If we wish to discover the subjects which are likely to interest and occupy the future electors and their representatives, we must not confine ourselves to the review of those matters which have hitherto been thought to constitute the orthodox list of party questions. In a previous paper we drew attention to work which still remains to be done, of the old kind, in the direction of "civil and religious liberty;" but we intimated our belief that the new Parliament would draw up a fresh programme of questions which, by common consent, would form the basis for future party conflicts. Many matters which have hitherto been considered as open questions, not only in cabinets, but by the rank and file of both parties, will assume an importance in the eyes of the new constituencies which will entitle them to rank amongst the foremost articles of faith in the political creed. We cannot doubt that the creeds of all political parties will be subjected to a general revision, and it is not difficult to prognosticate what subjects the more advanced school of Radicals are likely to insist upon bringing to the front. Under these circumstances, the real question which every Tory who has laid up in his heart Mr. Disraeli's dictum as to the Conservatism of the masses must ask himself is evidently this;—what will be the views of these new electors, not upon abstract questions, which are not likely to be mooted by any influential section of politicians, but upon those matters with which it is absolutely certain that the reformed Parliament will be called upon to deal, and probably without delay?

The anxious Conservative will run over in his mind some of those existing arrangements which he has been accustomed to see attacked by Radical forces, and he will wonder what evidence there is to prove

that the new electors will, in such cases, be on his side. Among other matters he will remember that his party fought a stoutly-contested battle in defence of the system of flogging in the army. "The system," he would say, "is one of our institutions, and Mr. Disraeli has declared that our institutions, which are but 'the embodiments of our national necessities,' will be safe under the guardianship of his new allies. But are householders below the seven-pound line really likely to look upon flogging as a national necessity? Surely on this point it is scarcely safe to count on their support. They are certain to go with the Radicals. It will be better to forestall the attack at once, and in defiance of the strong military element on the conservative benches, to expunge this article of faith from the conservative creed." In sober earnest, military questions will probably be treated very differently by Liberals and Conservatives respectively under the new régime. We willingly believe that the new electors may really be found to possess that greater sensitiveness on the point of national honour, and that readier disposition to have recourse to arms, which we have often been told to expect from the working classes. In the present aspect of affairs abroad, when the worship of force and the prestige of victorious aggression have once more somewhat rudely disturbed the rising hopes of those who predicted that wars were shortly to become anachronisms, we are inclined to believe that no harm will be done by a little accession of vigour to our national sentiments. The caution of the middle classes will be amply strong enough to balance any pugnacity which the new electors may display. But even if the assumption is correct that the working classes may shrink less from war than the representatives of middle-class Liberalism, it by no means follows that they will in any way sympathise with what we may be permitted to call, without offence, the more professional military spirit which is so often somewhat ostentatiously exhibited on the conservative benches of the House of Commons. We do not wish to imply that zealous military reformers may not be found on both sides of the Speaker's chair in the House of Commons, or, on the other hand, that there are not liberal politicians who are very conservative soldiers. But the tone of the two political parties with regard to army matters is eminently distinct, and whether it be the abolition of corporal punishment, or the modification of the purchase system, or the reduction of the expenses imposed upon officers, or any other army reform on which Liberals feel strongly, we can scarcely conceive that any man in his senses can entertain doubts as to the side towards which the representatives of working-class electors, whether they live in ten-pound or in four-pound houses, are likely to incline.

Is there any better hope for the Conservatives of the old school as regards another question on which they have strong hereditary prejudices? Are the game laws one of those institutions which, "being

the embodiment of national necessities," are likely to secure the loyalty of the newly-enfranchised class? The country gentlemen who follow Mr. Disraeli have better opportunities than we have for judging of the probable accession of strength to the cause of the game-laws by the enfranchisement of the poorest class of borough householders. We admit that in our view the subject, though serious, is not one of vital importance; but, like the question of flogging in the army which we touched just now, it is to a certain extent typical. If we know how a man will vote on the game laws, we can make a shrewd guess as to his probable votes on many other matters. The irrepressible ardour which the bulk of the Tory party invariably displays when it is summoned to the defence of the privileges of landowners with regard to game, and, on the other hand, the keenness with which a portion of the Liberals watch magisterial decisions on the subject of poaching affrays, are no doubt, to a certain extent, attributable to the party character which the question has assumed; and the one side is further animated with a real apprehension that changes in the law might interfere with one of the healthiest and manliest of English amusements which the country affords, while the other side entertains a legitimate jealousy of county magistrates being often, in these cases, to all intents and purposes judges and prosecutors at the same time. But, if we are not mistaken, both parties feel that, besides these issues, there are other matters involved. Changes in the game laws might tamper with vested rights, and with customs that have acquired the force of principles. We believe that our readers will easily feel what we mean, when we repeat that votes on the game laws are not bad indications of the tone of a man's mind; and we doubt if the Tories are justified in hoping for an accession of strength, in this respect, even from the new electors in agricultural boroughs least contaminated by the dreaded urban element.

We might go further, and express our doubts whether, if in other matters besides the game laws the jurisdiction of justices of the peace should be subjected to revision, and attempts should be made more and more to substitute the stipendiary system for the paternal and neighbourly authority of county magistrates, the new electors would be found to exert their power to defend existing arrangements. We are not speaking of the wisdom or expediency of this or of any other change to which we have occasion to refer. On many matters we should doubtless find most material differences of opinion between the new electors and ourselves. We are not presuming to point out how they ought to act, or to which side we would wish to see their influence given. What we desire to do is to show that no estimate of the principles and feelings which may probably prevail under the new order of things can be really useful if it is confined to vague generalities about the loyal Conservatism or the democratic Radicalism of the new class of voters. Such an estimate is sure to

mislead, unless it extends to specific measures, and deals with the opinions which are likely to be held on existing institutions, or on such questions which we already see rising before us. If the "conservative instincts" of the poorest class of voters in boroughs are a reality, and not a mere phrase, it is clearly most interesting for all parties to ascertain on what group of practical questions,—social, religious, or political,—this tendency is likely to be displayed.

It might be vaguely said that they will probably range themselves on the side of "authority." A crucial test is easily found. Will the Government appeal to its action on the Parks Bill as specially entitling it to the confidence of the working men,—not of those skilled and intelligent artisans whom Mr. Disraeli confesses to be so hopelessly liberal that their admission to the franchise without the class below them would have assured permanent ascendancy to his political rivals,—but even of that lower class whom Lord Derby has avowedly enfranchised for the purpose of "dishing the Whigs" and strengthening Tory influence? On no subject raised during the late session, except perhaps on the Trades' Union Commission, did the Conservatives appear to feel more strongly. The Parks Bill fell in legitimately and naturally with conservative views; yet, even if it had been more wisely framed and more opportunely introduced than was the case this year, we scarcely think that its prospects would have been much improved by an appeal from the existing constituencies to the alleged conservative stratum below the ten-pound line.

It should be observed that none of the subjects with which we have dealt hitherto can properly be called "class" questions. They are not cases in which the interests of the richer or poorer classes, or of the urban or rural elements, clash. Conservative farmers have far more actual annoyance from the game laws than Radical artisans. Our armies are mainly recruited from the agricultural districts; yet it is at metropolitan hustings that the practice of flogging soldiers is most loudly denounced. And Heaven forbid that the Parks Bill should be treated from a class point of view! The Conservatives, we will assume, pressed it in the interest of "authority" and of the people themselves; and the people treated it as a question of popular privilege, not as against the rich, but as against the Crown, or the police. But if, on many questions where the interests and prejudices of their own class are not at all involved, we find the new electors likely to be diametrically opposed to the conservative mode of thought, what can we expect in the case of those subjects where each class may legitimately hold a view of its own,—questions in this country, let us hope, not likely to bring classes into collision, but requiring to be settled by a system of "give and take," moderating the decision of the majority? If it be admitted that such questions exist,—and who can deny it?—every one must be prepared to find that with regard to them the new electors will act precisely in the same manner

as the members of other classes ;—they will make the best fight they can for themselves ; and sincere reformers, who believe that under the Constitution, such as it has been, the working class had not sufficient power to make its wants and wishes felt, will rejoice that in this respect the admission of so large a number of new voters is likely to effect a sensible improvement. The interests need not be conflicting, though they may be different. For instance, we believe that it is quite possible to legislate on trades' unions in a manner which shall neither hurt the employer nor the workman. But where the interests actually clash, or are supposed by both parties, or by either party, to clash, it is clear that the new electors will study their own interests as sturdily as landowners, or capitalists, or tradesmen study theirs. Has Mr. Disraeli built on this foundation ? It would indeed be a piece of Machiavelian strategy,—not entirely foreign to his policy,—to have enfranchised the poorest classes in boroughs, precisely on account of their interests being, in his opinion, more widely separated from those of their employers than from those of landed proprietors. For what would be more natural than that they should ally themselves with the landed interest in the hope of neutralising the influence in legislation exercised by that middle class to which the employers of labour generally belong.

The little desire shown by the Conservatives to enfranchise the poorer class of agricultural householders in counties gives some colour to such an idea. Greater confidence was shown by the leaders of the county-interest party in the “ residuum ” of towns than in the residuum with which they have to deal at home. They preferred to enfranchise classes employed by others rather than those whom they employed themselves ; as if they regarded the former as possible allies, and the latter as possible foes. Indeed, sometimes during the late session it was scarcely possible to resist the idea that Mr. Disraeli might have won over his followers to household suffrage by some such confidential argument as this ;—“ Give me carte-blanche as to the franchise in boroughs, and I will undertake that you shall be the winners by Reform. Practically the boroughs are lost to us now. They belong to the Liberals, as the counties belong to us. Let us try a bold course, and attempt a radical change of the borough franchise ; for we can't be worse off there than we are now, and therefore, if there is a change, it must be a change for the better. The Liberals clamour for representation of the working classes. Let us give it them,—taking it entirely out of their share of power, and keeping all that we ourselves have got. The worst that can happen is, that the boroughs remain as much lost to us as they are now, while the chances are that the many disputes which arise between the trading middle class and the workmen whom they employ may drive the latter into our arms. Thus we shall have the credit of the Reform Bill, yet our concessions will be made entirely at the expense of our political foes.

And consider the further advantage. Many of the Liberals will be so frightened at what I shall compel them to do, and what they will scarcely have the face to oppose, that they will actually come to our assistance in strengthening the county influence afterwards. They will consent to a re-arrangement of boundaries, to a large elimination of the urban element for rural constituencies, and a liberal increase of county members. Only let me carry an extension suffrage in the boroughs, where our party is nowhere, and I will secure a great accession of influence for the counties, where we rule supreme. Depend upon it, the Radicals will be so taken by the notion of household suffrage, that they will suffer no one to baffle me in my plans as to counties and boundaries, and sundry other devices, which, together with the chances of playing off the working classes in towns against their employers, will secure to the Tory party a long period of undoubted ascendancy."

If such is the argument which has converted staunch Conservatives into eager though clumsy advocates of household suffrage, we will only observe that it appears to involve more than one large assumption. It implies that it is a matter of indifference to the true Conservative what type of Liberal be returned for a borough provided the election of a Tory cannot be secured; and again, it assumes that there are more questions on which the new urban electors, presumed to belong to the working classes, will differ from their own employers, than on which they are likely to differ from the landed interest without.

Both assumptions appear to us radically incorrect. It cannot be a matter of indifference to sincere Tories,—from their own point of view,—whether the bulk of the Liberal party are divided from them by serious divergencies of opinion on all most important points, and by a perfectly different mode of thought and feeling, or, on the other hand, simply by the maintenance of opposite views on some determinate point which does not exclude considerable fellow-feeling on many matters of vital interest. Of course, if what is looked for is merely the supremacy of a certain set of men, and not the possibility of a certain line of conservative policy, then a vote is simply a vote, and in party conflicts the vote of an advanced Radical will not count more than the vote of a moderate Whig. From a short-sighted and narrow party point of view it may seem a cunning stratagem to clip the influence of that portion of the liberal party which is likely to supplant the Conservatives in office, and to transfer power from them to the Radical section, which is less likely to gain immediate possession of the Treasury bench. But that the triumph of conservative principles could be secured by strengthening the hands of those who differ from them more, and weakening the hands of those who differ from them less, seems to us a somewhat extravagant supposition. Though the great changes in the borough constituencies were to have

but a small effect on the strength of parties, simply as far as the counting of heads is concerned, it may surely be wise to assume that changes in the constituencies will certainly be followed by changes in the character of representatives, and in the ultimate popularity and supremacy of various political opinions. For instance, the Conservatives would find it a different thing to be confronted by a majority of very advanced Liberals instead of having to contend against a mixed body, equally numerous, of very moderate Whigs and very determined Radicals. We do not wish to infer that this will actually be their fate. We simply put the case as a hypothesis to explain our view, that if the Tories have laid the unction to their souls that they have little to lose in the boroughs, which are already in the hands of their political rivals, they may find themselves much mistaken. On the contrary, we believe that real Liberalism,—not the personal prospects of any particular set of men, but the cause of popular principles,—will be greatly invigorated by the accession of the new electors, not from the point of view of any probable increase to the nominal majority of liberal members, but from the likelihood of a stronger and broader character being imparted to the creed which they will be called upon to hold. It seems to us far from improbable that household suffrage will greatly decrease the number of those who, though enrolled on the lists of the liberal party, and voting in party divisions on that side, hold liberal views only on a very limited number of defined questions, but otherwise are eminently conservative in tone. The degree to which this class of members has modified the action of the party hitherto can scarcely be exaggerated, and if we are not mistaken, it is on them that the blow avowedly struck by Lord Derby's Government at the liberal party will fall with the greatest force.

As regards the other assumption, that the new borough electors belonging to the working classes are likely to suppose that their interests clash more with those of their employers than with those of the landed interest, and that therefore it would be politic on their part to accept an alliance with aristocratic and territorial influences in order to be able to check, if not to coerce, the political power wielded by their fellow townsmen of the middle class, it appears to us that a closer inspection will prove it to be equally unreliable.

Such an alliance may be valuable to both parties in certain emergencies. The Factory Acts were originally carried by a similar combination, and questions may arise when, for temporary purposes, a coalition may again be formed; but on the vast majority of political subjects there will be more identity of interest and sympathy of feeling between the different classes of borough voters amongst themselves, than between the poorest class of borough electors and territorial lords. Take the important question of Taxation, and the broad issue as to the respective burdens to be borne by land or by trade. Here the interests of employed and employers would be iden-

tical. We suspect the manufacturer and the receiver of daily wages would be equally opposed to any burdens on the trade which sustained them both. Or take the case of some great calamity falling on a particular branch of industry; it would probably strike at masters and men alike. In some cases such calamities are indirectly due to political causes, in others they may be remedied or modified by political action. The cattle plague involved much imperial legislation, and the remedial measures taken by no means affected town and country alike. On what side would the new borough electors have been likely to be found? On the side of indemnifying cattle-owners at the public expense? On the side of that compact body of land-owners and representatives of agricultural districts who took the opportunity of exhibiting to the House the overwhelming power which, notwithstanding any statistics to the contrary, is wielded by "land" in Parliament?

Or, to take another instance, is it probable that the working classes in towns will repay the landed interest for the undoubted help which it rendered them in carrying the Factory Acts, by aiding the representatives of agricultural districts in the resistance which they seem disposed to offer to legislation of the same kind applied to land? Ominous indications have already been given that conservative county gentlemen think compulsory legislation as to the conditions of employment, the length of working hours, and the education of children, to be all very well, and even highly desirable, as between manufacturers and their work-people, but that similar enactments would be misapplied if introduced to regulate the relations between themselves and their labourers. Is it conceivable that in such a resistance they would secure the support of the poorer borough householders?

There is another consideration which appears to us not without force. Independently of their recent admission to the franchise, the working classes have a very sufficient sense of their own power of resisting any coercion on the part of their employers, and we doubt whether there is any legislation in that direction at all justifiable in the eyes of the Conservatives, which a Tory Government could offer them as a bribe for their assistance on other measures. Besides, trades' unions have modified the situation very much, and have tended to change the current of public opinion very materially. Look in what direction we will, we fail to discover the actual questions on which the new electors are to display conservative instincts in the sense hitherto assigned to these words. Will they take the Tory views as to primogeniture and entails? Will they instruct their representatives to oppose Mr. Locke King's Bill, which would enact that in cases of intestacy, real property, instead of reverting to the eldest son, should be divided in the same way as personal property? This would be precisely one of those cases in which that vague attachment to existing institutions on which Mr. Disraeli pro-

fesses to build his hopes ought to come into play. Is it likely to be the case? What is the foundation for such a belief?

When we declare our entire inability to apprehend the points on which Mr. Disraeli believes the bulk of the new electors to be Tories at heart, we should not omit to state that we have in our minds the Toryism of the rank and file, the sentiments and views which animate the majority of the party,—that Toryism in which the Tories themselves really believe,—not the policy which their leaders adopt, either because they are in advance of their party, or on account of "political exigencies" which we need not explain. Lord Stanley's foreign policy, for instance, has been essentially liberal, and the cordiality, almost enthusiastic, with which many of his expositions were received by his parliamentary opponents contrasted somewhat remarkably with the very quiet and undemonstrative respect shown on such occasions by the country gentlemen, a class of men generally demonstrative enough. No doubt, too, Mr. Disraeli himself would gladly sketch a programme which would be very acceptable to those whom he looks upon as his new allies, but the programme would not be conservative; it would not be palatable to those on whose shoulders Mr. Disraeli has been lifted to his present position. Will he venture still further to run counter to their traditions and their prejudices, and induce them to import a number of new liberal heresies into their orthodox conservative creed? We trust that the Edinburgh banquet may have enlightened the public in this respect. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that occasion should repeat to his Scotch hosts, with the necessary amplifications, the interpretation of the Tory creed of which he delivered himself in the Mansion House at the close of the session, adding, above all, that as in foreign politics and in our dealings with subject races "the Tory party sought not for itself the spurious force to be derived from the advocacy of cosmopolitan principles," so in domestic questions it repudiated the spurious force to be derived by talking humanitarian jargon, he will hit the humour of what, till now, he has been able to call his party, and lull them into the belief that even if he carries measures which they do not understand, he is acting in a spirit entirely their own. If, on the other hand, he can afford to look rather to those whom he desires to win than to those whose support he carries in his pocket; if the adhesion of the new electors is to be secured, not so much to the measures and principles hitherto considered conservative, as to the men whom Conservatives put to the front, he will have boldly told his friends that they had so far only seen the beginning of his concessions, and that the abolition of flogging in the army, the surrender of the system of purchasing commissions, the modifications of the game laws, the final abandonment of the Parks Bill, the extension of the system of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour, the support of Mr. Locke King's Intestacy Bill, and of the Bill

for legalising marriages with a deceased wife's sister, will henceforth be considered part and parcel of the true Tory creed. If, at the same time, he should have stated that Government action would henceforth be more vigorous, and that the system of "laissez faire" and the doctrines of strict political economy would not be allowed to hamper his policy too much, we think he will have laid the ground for a very formidable alliance between the new electors and—himself.

If Mr. Disraeli chooses to call the result of that alliance, based on such a programme, the conservative party, he will have been right in supposing that the Reform Bill would secure ascendancy to the conservative cause; but if words and names are still to retain their meaning, far from believing in the possibility of such an event, we must confess that the examination of the various questions in which the new voters are likely to take an interest appears to us to lead to the very opposite conclusion. We do not mean to say that the new power created will be added to the forces of those who have hitherto been the acknowledged political rivals of the Conservatives. From one point of view, the "liberal party" may even be broken up. The wide latitude hitherto allowed to various shades of liberal opinions may be seriously narrowed, and amalgamation between the most advanced school and the more moderate Liberals may become more difficult than ever. There may be sore trials in store for that large number of men who have been honest Liberals all their lives, friends to Reform, keen for religious liberty, true to the backbone on most matters which have hitherto constituted the test of political loyalty, but who may yet be unable to fall in with the broader tone which already has begun to mark the temper and opinions, and will soon begin to mark the measures, of the great liberal party.

Few we think can be blind to the fact that "sentiment" is beginning to play a more important part in politics than it has been hitherto permitted to do. "Sentimental grievances" no doubt still meet with considerable ridicule, but the hearing accorded to them becomes more respectful, and the divisions taken with regard to them gain in importance. Conspicuous amongst sentimental grievances are some of the Irish questions. Many Irish questions of course involve practical grievances as well; but we are not at this moment thinking of Ireland. We have rather such subjects in our mind as are involved in the question of flogging, of capital punishment, the treatment of prisoners, the evils of agricultural gangs,—questions which, if we might use a very dangerous phrase, Frenchmen would analyse as connected with "the dignity of man." It appears to us that the new electors will impart a stimulus to this whole class of subjects, and that by their aid "sentiment," with its virtues and its faults, will make considerable progress in extruding cynicism from the very commanding position which it still occupies in politics. It cannot be denied that the lower

strata of society are much more sentimental than the upper, and that, above all, they do not shrink, in the same way, from displaying this side of their nature. And independently of this tendency on their part, in all cases where the State comes into contact with the individual, they have much more reason to be anxious lest the laws should tamper with their dignity as men. They know, on the one hand, that a certain class of considerations is less likely to weigh in their case, and, on the other, they feel that what may not be a humiliation to men whose position is recognised by society, may be a positive degradation to them. That they often degrade themselves by intemperance or improvidence does not affect their views in this respect; on the contrary, it enhances the feeling, and induces them to demand from the State not only to abstain in its dealings with them from degrading punishments, invidious distinctions, and all that tends to destroy their self-respect, but even to assist them in raising themselves by passing compulsory laws which might lessen their temptations and protect them against themselves.

We feel certain that for good or for evil the new electors will increase the strength of the sentimental section of the House of Commons, and we anticipate, further, that their influence will materially lessen the stringency with which the doctrines of "laissez faire" will be applied. We should not be surprised if, foremost among the issues which will divide the new Parliament, conflicts as to the limits within which the principle of "laissez faire" is to be permitted to rule should find a place. The new electors may demand that these limits should be narrowed, and may impose duties on Parliament and Government which would at present be considered as beyond their sphere. Compulsory legislation is less repelling to the lower than to the middle and upper classes. Government interference and protection have more attraction for those who find their class surrounded by evils and troubles from which they can scarcely perceive a way out themselves, than for those who are only afraid that their existing prosperity might be meddled with or disturbed. Besides, the stronger passions and the greater eagerness of a less-educated class make them more impatient of present evils and less sensitive as to the principles involved in their removal. Political economy, to which the old Radical party owed so many triumphs, and the country so vast an increase of prosperity, will be put on its mettle to resist many a fierce attack. The most advanced school of present Radicals themselves often lift their hand against it, and in no other respect will the actions of the new electors require to be more carefully watched.

We have already stated our belief that, in most measures which regard the person, the new electors will be on the same side as the bulk of the liberal party. What may we expect as regards laws affecting property? Will vested rights be regarded with the same veneration by men who enjoy none themselves as by men who have

themselves inherited vested rights for generations ? We are of course not thinking of measures directly attacking private property,—of measures of spoliation. No one believes in any serious risk of such a kind, even if the present electors in towns and counties were not amply strong enough, when united, to outvote the newly-enfranchised class. But in all matters where endowments come into question,—endowments of schools, privileges of corporations, the property of the universities and colleges, ancient trusts,—the poorest class of householders will clearly be free from the fear which operates so strongly on a large class ; “ If we do this now, what next ? If we touch corporate property, will private property not be exposed ? Does not the title of the Irish Church to its revenues, of Trinity College to its property, rest on the same broad basis as the title of Knowsley or Woburn ? May not the interference of Parliament with the legacies of pious founders of ancient trusts be followed by interference with our rights of tying up our property as we like, with entails, and, in the end, with primogeniture itself ? ” Such fears would clearly have little weight with the new electors. To say the least, they are as little likely to have prejudices in favour of vested rights as any other class, and if the Conservatives wish to rally them in defence of the endowments of religious or other bodies, it will have to be done by appealing, not to traditional claims, based on inheritance and the analogy of private property, but to services actually rendered, and present tangible usefulness.

Our space forbids us to push any further our inquiry into the probable bias of the new electors. We have scarcely alluded to the part which they are likely to play on ecclesiastical questions. Will they generally support the Established Church ? Will they ratify the proud claims put forward on its part that it is the poor man’s Church ? Or will they not, at all events, first require that the churches should be really thrown open to the poor, and be in all senses free, so that the endowments should not only nominally, but substantially, relieve the mass of the people from taxing themselves for their religion ?—or will they share the Dissenters’ view that voluntary efforts should be substituted for endowments ? On no subject should we anticipate greater difficulty than in forming correct conclusions as to what we may expect from the new electors in this respect. We should regard with much suspicion any statistics professing to register the extent of attachment, indifference, or antagonism to the Church among the newly-enfranchised householders. It is sometimes asserted that they will be thoroughly anti-Catholic ; but, supposing this to be true, will they be Dissenters, or Churchmen, or Secularists ? Will they unite with Dissenters and Secularists for the overthrow of the Establishment and the abolition of endowments ; or will they, as regards the Church, justify Mr. Disraeli’s confidence in their attachment to the existing institutions ? We ourselves refrain from attempting to solve this

question. In this respect we confess Lord Derby's Reform Bill is to us really a "leap in the dark."

In other respects the darkness, as we hope to have shown, does not appear to be by any means impenetrable. We conceive that the new electors will, on the whole, throw most of their weight on to the most liberal side of the liberal party; that they will attribute an importance to sentimental questions which these questions have hitherto not been able to secure; that, as at home they will demand greater respect for the susceptibilities of their class, so abroad they will support rather the "cosmopolitan" than the dynastic element, and, on condition of our foreign policy falling in with their sympathies, will be more ready to fight than the existing constituencies; that in social questions they will require more vigorous action, a fiercer warfare against abuses, more Government interference; that in economical matters they will be less faithful to political economy; that in finance they will be on the side of trade rather than of land, of direct rather than of indirect taxation; that they will be less chary of touching vested rights, and more exacting as to public utility; and that there may even be a tendency to take a somewhat different view of the right definition of national prosperity. An immense responsibility will rest on those Liberals whose strength the Reform Bill has most tended to increase. It will be for them to direct the new forces into useful channels, while preventing them from overflowing the banks. For ourselves, we confess that we do not for a moment believe in any conservative views on the part of the "residuum," and we admit that among the new electors we shall look for many opinions different from those by which Parliament has hitherto been swayed. But we firmly believe that the accession of vigour and of new blood, the appreciation of the wants and feelings of millions of our fellow-subjects, the revelations on matters of which the majority of present electors are necessarily ignorant, the extension of sympathy with our forms of government which must result from the admission of many hundred thousands of voters belonging to a class which had hitherto few accredited channels for making its wishes known, will vastly increase the usefulness and the authority of Parliament, while the classes who have hitherto exclusively wielded political power will still retain ample strength to prevent their being overwhelmed by numbers on any question where they have right and justice on their side.

THE TOURIST AT HOME.

THERE are certain articles which seem to be stereotyped in the presses of our English newspapers. The "stoppage in the streets" indignation paper, the protest against female extravagance in dress, the warning against the speculative tendencies of the age, and a score of other leaders, are so familiar to the "constant reader," that when he takes up his favourite paper, and sees the first sentence, he can tell perfectly well what is coming, and how the article is about to conclude. Amongst the many traditions of the British press, one of the most cherished is that every paper which respects itself is bound to insert at least every year an article contrasting the advantages of home and foreign pleasure-travel,—always, we need hardly say, to the advantage of the former. Somebody,—one of that mysterious body, the unknown correspondents of the newspapers,—writes a letter complaining of some grievance he has sustained in his wanderings abroad. Forthwith a number of fellow-sufferers join in the chorus of complaint. A lively and animated controversy is set on foot as to the insolence,—let us say,—of Prussian railway officials, the absence of foot-baths in French hotels, the annoyances to which English ladies are subjected by the bold glances of foreign admirers, the impossibility of avoiding damp sheets in Swiss hotels, or any one of the countless afflictions to which travelling British flesh appears to be heir abroad. Then, when the topic is pretty well run dry, the paper, which in the dead season has hit upon an unexpected mine of wealth in the wrongs of its valued correspondents, winds up the discussion with one of the stereotyped articles to which we allude. After summing up the case, the leader, we may safely say, concludes somewhat after this fashion:— "Still, while appreciating the grievances of which our correspondents complain, we must tell them candidly that the remedy lies in their own hands. After all, nothing compels them to seek recreation in foreign countries, where tastes, habits, and social institutions are different from,—we might add, inferior to,—those of their native land. Strange as the statement may appear to many of our countrymen, there are districts within a few hours' easy journey of this metropolis whose beauties may be favourably compared with those of the most popular resorts of foreign travel. There are persons, no doubt, who will go from John o' Groats to the Land's End, as well as from Dan to Beersheba, and find that all is barren; but we have no sympathy with that hypercritical disposition which, in its enthusiasm for the

grandeur of continental scenery, can find no charm in the humbler but not less exquisite beauty of these varied islands. We have doubtless no mountains equal in magnitude to the Alpine ranges ; our lakes cannot compete in size with those of Italy or Switzerland ; our rivers are not rivals in volume of water of the Danube and the Rhine ; our scenery is on a smaller scale, and on that account is generally the more enjoyable. What the tourist, however, may lose in grandeur, he will find amply compensated in comfort, economy, and freedom from annoyance. Travel, like charity, should begin at home ; and if the complaints to which we have given currency should be the means of directing the stream of tourists to the countless scenes of beauty with which the United Kingdom is so richly studded, we shall have done a service to the travelling public."

Some such article as this we must all of us have read at least a score of times in our life. Correspondents, under the signature of "A True Briton," or "John Bull," or "Old England," and who generally would be found at home making their bread as innkeepers or lodging-house owners in English watering-places, write to thank the journal for its able and pathetic appeal on behalf of English scenery ; and there the controversy drops. Still our countrymen and country-women who want a holiday cross the channel with as much persistency as if the articles in question had never been indited. And our private opinion is, that if all the newspapers in England went on repeating the same exhortations daily from now till next June, there would be no sensible diminution in the number of tourists who will leave England next season for the Continent. Lord Macaulay says that one of the few things in which people really follow their own taste is in the books they buy. We are inclined to include, among the number of things on which people act according to their own pleasure, the tours they take. No doubt there is a good deal of fashion about the resorts of tourists, as about other matters. Zermatt, for instance, has of late years got something of the prestige which formerly attached to Interlaken ; but there is no perceptible change in the general current of fashion. Each year, as the facilities of locomotion increase, the tide of tourists sets in more and more strongly for the Continent ;—less for our home pleasure-resorts. There is no good in ignoring this fact, or in seeking to explain it by some accidental or transient cause. The only rational account to be given of this phenomenon is that English people prefer spending their holidays abroad to spending them at home. Why they so prefer is a point on which we wish to offer a few suggestions. Partly from desire, partly from necessity, a large portion of the present writer's life has been spent in foreign travel, so that we have acquired a considerable amount of that singularly useless knowledge,—acquaintance with the resorts of tourists in many lands. Of late, circumstances have led us to visit several of our chief home pleasure-grounds ; and it is from a comparison of our past and present experiences that we

have arrived at the conclusions we desire to lay before the readers of SAINT PAULS.

In some not unimportant respects, even if the scenery of Great Britain were far more beautiful than it is, and if the accommodations of home travel were infinitely superior to what they are, our native shores would never be equal to foreign resorts for a native tourist in search of rest. We, even the idlest and wealthiest of us, live very hard and very fast in this land of ours ; far harder and far faster than any nation, unless it be our kinsmen across the Atlantic. We crowd as much occupation, whether it be of work or pleasure, into the four-and-twenty hours as they will well bear ; and we hardly know what it is to enjoy the luxury of doing nothing. And so, when holiday-time comes round, our natural instinct is to seek change,—to get out of the old treadmill in which we have been toiling,—to leave behind us, as far as possible, the very memory of our labour. Now, in England this is hardly possible to us. Wherever we go we see men engaged in the same restless round of occupation as that from which we have escaped for a season. England, even if we throw in Scotland and Ireland, is a small place as far as area goes, after all ; and wherever we may turn, we hear the same ideas uttered, more or less in the same language, read the same papers, and live the same lives. But the moment we have crossed the Straits of Dover we are in a new world, filled with people who speak another tongue, think other thoughts, have other ways, and who, whether for better or worse, are other than the men and women amongst whom our lives are spent. Judging from our own experience, we should say that one day at Boulogne, or Calais, or Dieppe gives more change, and therefore more rest, to the mind of an Englishman than a week spent at Brighton, or Bath, or Cheltenham.

Still, if the longing to change their normal surroundings was the main cause which drives English holiday folk away from home, it would follow that the same causes ought to act elsewhere after the same fashion. Yet we do not find this to be the case. The tourists of other countries travel chiefly in their own lands ; and even if they venture beyond its confines they seldom, if ever, come to England for pleasure. Of the thousands of foreign families,—French, German, and Russian,—who crowd every year to the sea-bathing resorts on the coast, from Ostend in the north to Biarritz in the south, not one in five hundred ever even dreams of crossing over for a change to one of our English watering-towns. There must be a reason for this, and that reason we take to consist in this simple fact ;—that if you are travelling for pleasure, you can get your pleasure so much more easily, cheaply, and satisfactorily abroad than you can with us.

We have no wish to deny the genuine beauties of our own land. But still it argues no lack of patriotic feeling to admit that our show regions, our lakes and mountains, are not to be reckoned in the same

rank as those of Switzerland or Italy or the Tyrol or Norway. Still, if we have no objects,—to use the word in its French signification,—of extraordinary beauty, we have a great amount of pretty country, pleasant to gaze upon and travel in. Indeed, in its peculiar tranquil homely order of beauty, the whole of the south of England seems to us, after having seen many lands, the fairest of its kind of any country that we know. Then, too, we must also grant that the climate of these isles is not exactly adapted to holiday travelling. The utter absence of certainty about our weather at any period of the year tells heavily against the claims of England as a ground for tourists. During the summer season you may have wet days, abroad ; but that bugbear of all holiday-goers, a week of continued rain,—an event so common with us,—is a contingency hardly anticipated in foreign summer travel.

Thus, if you want change, or if you wish to feast your eyes on the highest beauties of nature or art, or if you desire fine weather, you naturally go abroad. Still there are such hosts of well-to-do tourists who, from a variety of reasons easily to be imagined, would sooner stop within the Four Seas than seek their recreation abroad, that none of these explanations are quite sufficient to show why you so seldom hear of English people taking a tour for pleasure in their own country. We go to different places to bathe, or hunt, or shoot, or fish ; but we, as a rule, no more think of travelling about England for the pleasure of doing so than we should dream of reading old sermons for our own amusement. Oddly enough, perhaps, the same remark applies to America. There is more locomotion in the States than in any other country ; but the natives do not travel about South America as tourists. And the reason we imagine to be, on both sides the Atlantic, that home travel, as compared with continental, is so dear, so uncomfortable, and, above all, so dull.

It is very hard, without entering into details which our space would not permit of, to compare precisely the relative cost of travelling and of hotel expenses abroad and at home. Very long experience, however, has led us to the conclusion that the cost of hotel life on the Continent, taking one place with another, and assuming that you spare yourself no ordinary comfort, and live, in fact, on the footing of the "most favoured" guest, does not exceed twenty francs a day. In England, on the other hand, you have to be very careful if you wish to keep your bill within a pound a day. As to railway fares, they are notoriously higher here than in France, and far higher than in Germany. It costs you more to get from London to Edinburgh or Dublin than it does to get from the same place to Paris or Brussels,—travelling in both cases by express trains at first-class fares. But these long through routes are not the fair test of the cost of travelling in England. If you wish to see the country pleasantly, you naturally prefer to travel short distances, going from point to point where you may desire to stop. Let

any traveller act upon this suggestion, and make the journey from London to Scotland, halting at all the different spots he would individually wish to visit along his road, and then compare the amount of his different railway fares with what he would have paid had he traversed the same distance straight through! For some reason,—or, perhaps, for none,—any halt, or stop, or change of carriage in this country is attended with an outlay not required abroad. We do not say people cannot travel cheaply, if they choose, in England; but they must travel uncomfortably if they do; and the first essential for the enjoyment of ordinary travel is that you should be comfortable, and not be bothered about the necessity of looking after shillings and sixpences.

But our chief complaint is, that even if you are tolerably indifferent to expense, you still cannot find comfort in English pleasure-travelling. A great, and by no means the least important, portion of the traveller's existence must be passed in inns. Now, at our English hotels you have undoubtedly the necessaries of travel life, but you have a very small allowance of the luxuries. No man travelling on business has any cause to complain if he gets clean beds, and wholesome food, and decent lodging. These things you can get in our English hostries as well as in those of any other country; and persons who, like ourselves, have travelled much in countries where clean linen and eatable victuals are rarely to be found, can alone tell what a void in life is caused by their absence. Still, if you are travelling simply and solely for your own gratification, you do desire something more than negative virtues in your purveyors of entertainment. There are a few first-class hotels scattered over England; but still we cannot recall one which has anything of beauty, or elegance, or attractiveness, to recommend it. There are hundreds of inns, known to every continental tourist, which the traveller remembers with a sort of sentimental regard, which he would regret never to visit again, which he would go out of his way to avoid missing on his journeys. Of what single English hotel, from the Clarendon downwards, could a like assertion be made with any degree of credibility? It may be said that hotels like the Bellevue at Dresden, the Bauer at Zurich, the Italia at Florence, owe much to outlooks not to be matched in these islands. This is true; but then, even in English towns where a picturesque view is to be had, our great inns are seldom if ever placed in such positions as to command the view. In fact, the idea that an hotel can, or should be, made anything but a place in which a guest may sleep comfortably and eat decently, seems never to have penetrated the mind of the British landlord. Yet, if you are travelling for pleasure only, you must necessarily pass a considerable period of time within your hotel during which you can neither eat nor sleep. Portions of existence so passed are very dreadful to pass through, not pleasant even to look back upon.

It is not always possible to have a sitting-room to yourself, and if you do, you increase your rate of expenditure by at least a half. Moreover, from the very nature of things, the great bulk of the guests at any British inn must necessarily be sitting-roomless. And if it is fine, you cannot be always out of doors ; if it rains,—and in our hill-districts it generally does rain,—you must perforce stop indoors. You may, if you like, sit in your bed-room. They are all alike, these English sleeping-places,—the small rooms with the large beds ; the chest of drawers covered with a whity-brown macassar ; the dingy, gloomy paper ; the deal table ; the bare walls ; the three cane-bottomed chairs ; the mahogany washing-stand ; the Bible with the name of the hotel stamped upon it,—are common to them all. If you get tired and weary of sitting in your bed-room, you can descend into the public coffee-room. Eating is generally going on there in some form or other all through the day. It is only in a very few of our newest hotels that drawing-rooms exist as an institution ; and the smell of meals that have just been, or are now being, or are just about to be, eaten, hangs always about the British coffee-room. A couple of straight-backed black horsehair-covered sofas, a number of chairs of the same material, a sarcophagus-looking sideboard, and a long table, which is always being taken to pieces to have fresh joints added or subtracted, complete the furniture. A county directory, a local newspaper, one copy of the *Times*, which is generally in hand, and half a dozen placard advertisements of different life-assurance societies, are all the intellectual resources provided for the inmates of this chamber of horrors. If you belong to the male gender, you may possibly smoke in some damp out-of-the-way recess ; or, if you are lucky, you may even find a billiard-room, and have a game with a mouldy marker. But if you belong to the fairer half of creation, or have ladies in your party, then you cannot well but chose the coffee-room as your only resort. It may be said that the salles-à-manger of continental inns are not ideal resorts for weather-bound tourists. We acknowledge the justice of the objection ; but then it should also be allowed that they are not quite so deadly-lively as English coffee-rooms ; that inn bed-rooms abroad are commonly bright, cheerful, airy rooms, which you can use as sitting-rooms with comfort ; and, above all, that the smallest continental town, in any of the districts which are frequented by tourists, offers resources not available in similar places at home.

Not very many months ago it was our lot to pass two nights within a short interval of each other at two watering-places on the French and English coasts. In both cases we were delayed accidentally, and were unacquainted with a living soul at the place of our night's sojourn ; we had neither books nor occupation ; we were thrown entirely upon the resources of the place for amusement. On this side the channel we passed one of the dreariest evenings in our recollection. We ordered

dinner; which, as usual in such places, consisted of the invariable sole and mutton cutlet; we walked up and down the pier to get an appetite; we spent as much time as possible over dinner; and then the evening had closed in. We found there were still some four hours which must elapse before we could go to bed. Of public amusements there was nothing, or next to nothing. Mr. Woodin had given his entertainment some days before; and the sisters "Sophia and Anne" were expected in the ensuing week; but the only available place of entertainment open was a fifth-rate music-hall, chiefly patronised by the seafaring population of the place. The billiard-room, which was also the smoking-room, was filled with a number of local young men about town, whose jokes were not interesting to a stranger; and after a stroll through the half-lit, shabby streets, we were obliged to come back to the coffee-room, and amuse ourselves with the advertisement sheet of an old London newspaper which chanced to have been left there.

Across the channel, though the size, character, and "reason of being" of the two towns were exactly similar, our only difficulty lay in the selection of amusements. There was a table-d'hôte dinner, where—the guests being English tourists abroad—there was a good deal of conversation. Before dinner there was an open-air concert given on the pier, at which all the rank and fashion and beauty of the town displayed itself for the benefit of the public. In the evening there was a performance at the theatre, where the acting,—and that is perhaps not saying much,—was up to the rank of an ordinary London playhouse. Besides this, there were the public reception-rooms, open to any decently-dressed stranger on the payment of a franc. The night we were there a concert was given in the rooms; the night following there was to be a ball; the night after that a conjuring performance. Besides, you could cut in, if you liked, at a rubber of whist; you could lose your money in a raffle; you could play at pool in one of the brightest and pleasantest billiard-rooms we have ever seen. And if you preferred wandering about the town, you could look into rows upon rows of bright shop-windows; you could go into a score of handsome cafés, and sit there for as long as you liked at the cost of a few halfpence. It may be said that none of these amusements are very exciting,—that they are all of a frivolous character, in which grown-up people ought not to take delight. But our experience leads us to believe that grown-up travellers are very like children, and want amusement as much as if they had only just left school before they started on their journey. The result of our two evenings passed thus at home and abroad was to cause us to form a mental resolution to avoid the English watering-place in our future travels, and to take the earliest opportunity of revisiting the French one. We quote this experience of ours because it is one whose truth any of our readers may verify for himself with-

out difficulty. A couple of nights passed alternately at Ramsgate and Ostend, Folkestone and Boulogne, Brighton and Dieppe, Hastings and Trouville, will serve, we think, to point a lesson which many years of travel have impressed upon us.

The chief reason then, as we take it, why British holiday-makers who can contrive to get abroad do so almost invariably instead of visiting the pleasure-grounds of their own land, is the total want of amusement provided for tourists in these islands. On a home tour the evenings are mortally and drearily long. We are writing these lines at one of the brightest and most popular of English sea-side towns. The place lives upon visitors, and, but for being a resort of visitors, has no means of existence. Yet, beyond providing them at high rates with board and lodgings, it does nothing whatever for their entertainment. There are no public rooms, no town bands, no sea-side walks or drives, as there would be at any continental watering-place of half the size ; there is not even such a thing as a tolerable reading-room where you can see the papers. We have barrel-organs, Ethiopian serenaders, and a Punch and Judy show ; but otherwise we have no kind of entertainment. Not only is there no theatre open, but there is not a stage in the town on which plays could be acted. A spectroscope, whatever that may be, has been throughout some three weeks the sole amusement provided for the public of what the guide-books inform us is one of the most fashionable and frequented of the watering-places in the south of England. Nor are we much better off in the way of those creature comforts of which we English people fancy we possess almost a monopoly. The lodging-houses are as bare and comfortless as English lodging-houses are wont to be. The culinary resources of these establishments do not extend beyond chops and steaks and plain roast meat, not bad things doubtless in their way, but still viands which the least dainty palate may find monotonous after a limited time. Yet practically you must either dine at home or not dine at all.

At the one large hotel in the town you can dine with economy for about ten shillings a head, and even then you have an inferior dinner to what you would get at any second-rate restaurant in France for less than half the money. In the whole town there is not a single restaurant, café, or dining-room where you can get anything to eat. Yet, in most respects, I should say this place was above the average of European sea-side towns. The air is beautiful, the sea view remarkably fine, and the surrounding country very pretty ; but, with all this, it is inferior as a sojourning place for tourists to foreign baths of far smaller natural beauties, simply because nature has been left to do everything, and art nothing.

So, in the long run, it comes to this, that we all of us think our neighbours would do well to patronise English watering-places and lakes and mountains, to stop in their own country when they are out

for a holiday, to spend their money among their own people. But the moment we are called on to choose a holiday tour for ourselves, we at once, and without hesitation, go abroad. We do so because we cannot find the same comforts or amusements or accommodation at home as we do upon the Continent ; and though we may fancy others ought to do without these things, we are not disposed to part with them ourselves when we are travelling for the sake of enjoyment. Of course we shall be told that home life can only be had at England ; that our people, happily for themselves, do not spend their evenings at theatres and cafés, but take their pleasure in the bosom of their families ; and that, therefore, the sources of recreation which are open to the continental pleasure-seeker are not available to our native tourists when on "pleasure bent." The "pleasure of the domestic fireside" argument is often driven further than it will bear ; but, to a certain extent, it is sound ; and we admit that the home life of England could hardly be what it is if our cities offered greater resources of entertainment to the homeless traveller. But exactly for that reason, though we may select to live in England, we prefer to spend our holidays away from its shores. We share this conviction with the overwhelming majority of the tourist world, and our only wonder is that, in the face of the experience of years, our papers should still go on repeating assertions about the charms of English travel which writers and readers alike know at heart to be false and groundless.

SECRETS.

STRANGE things we reck not of, orreck in vain,
In calm mysterious splendour round us reign;
His kingdom still, until His kingdom come.
The heart that loves them knoweth not their ways,
Nor understandeth half the hymns of praise
They sing to comfort us, and lead us home.

And of all marvels that creation hoards,
The sweet deep secrets, past the reach of words,
I know no marvel like my love for thee.
The treasure of my heart, unseen, untold,
Lies hidden, low, as do the sands of gold,
And rends it as the lightning rends the tree.

In every change, through nature's harmonies,
Some hidden charm, some dear new wonder lies;
Some tender story that we fail to read.
The green leaves whisper things we cannot hear;
The stars unnoted vanish from their sphere;
And wounds no skill can fathom only bleed.

The dews and storms of snow their courses run;
Light was, before the word which called the sun;
The winter and the summer rains must fall.
In the new birth the bright life perisheth;
The sleep by which we live resembles death.
Only the hand that made them knoweth all.

Within the fern's sweet stem the oak lies hidden,
Till by love's art the scented veil is riven;
Neither is love neglected, lost or dead.
From the decay of verdure and of flowers,
New plants spring up, the sweetest in our bowers;
And memory embalms the joy that's fled.

In the far west, the solitary bird
Makes through the night its solemn music heard,
Chanting the "Miserere" low and sad.
The wild woods echo the unearthly cry,
And stricken souls in midnight silence sigh,
Sighs that are prayers, to make the morning glad.

But while these tender marvels fade away,
Each in its fleeting hour, its passing day,
And each with death, and with oblivion rife,
My love is part of immortality;
A human soul's desire, which cannot die;
The sweet and bitter secret of a life.

THE DECAY OF THE STAGE.

PERHAPS one of the greatest delusions of the day is, the pleasant delusion that there exists a "sound healthy taste" for the drama, and that now, if ever, are the palmy days of the stage. The number of theatres, the state of the profession,—like every other, overcrowded,—the perfection to which scenery and machinery have been brought, the salaries, and the crowded houses, are substantial evidence of this palminess,—an epithet which somehow has been considered the special property of things theatrical. With pieces "running" one hundred and two hundred nights, with such triumphs of "realism" as coal-mine shafts, water caves, set streets, city offices reproduced; and, above all, conflagrations, house-burnings, that to the eye can hardly be distinguished from the original models, with water, fire, ice, grass, imitated perfectly, and with the easier resource, where it can be done, of bringing the real objects themselves on the stage, things surely ought to look palmy. Yet it may be declared that if we were to take the sense of the profession generally, managers and actors, it would be admitted that decay is setting in. The mechanists, scene-painters, and actors,—they are named according to their proper precedence,—are at this end of their tether. They have exhausted their fertile fancy. The burlesque "arrangers" and actors have tried every conceivable physical extravagance within the compass of "break-downs," low dresses, goddesses looped up at the knee, parodies of songs, &c. The mythology is run out. The opera stories are done. So, too, with scenic effects. In real life there are only half-a-dozen tremendous and dramatic physical catastrophes which can confound and surprise. When we have seen a fire, an earthquake, a breaking of the ice and drowning, an accident, very few things remain either difficult to imitate or likely to astonish. We have had all this. But one "sensation" effort remains untried, the hint of which is at the service of the skilful playwright,—the running off the line of a train, and its being precipitated over a bridge. What will come next? It must be something of this "school," new, but of lower interest, in which case our excitement will be languid. The man who has drunk brandy always, will find tea insipid. So with the break-downs, the dressing, the mythology, and the vulgar parodies of songs. They can only reproduce now. By-and-by even the admirers of this class of entertainment will find that the stage has grown dull.

But for others, who expect another sort of entertainment, it may

be fairly asked, is not the stage dull now? How many are there who set out for the night's amusement, with a complacent alacrity of anticipation, as Johnson might say, and by eleven o'clock are suffering a strange agony, compounded of tediousness, fatigue, a sort of eternal weariness, and a sense that the whole will never end! Of course we hear laughter and sounds of enjoyment in the body of the house; but it must be remembered that here are persons who have been working hard all the day and all the year, and to whom, perhaps, the annual visit to the play-house, the sight of the company, the lights, the gay scenery, is a treat. The cheap test of what is called a run now-a-days is no evidence of a flourishing profession. A certain class of people must go to the theatre to fill in their evenings; and, above all, it must be remembered that the London theatres are the theatres for the kingdom, and that the audiences are changing every night. The manager is catering for England, Ireland, and Scotland, and a sprinkling from the Continent. This is another result of a fatal centralisation, and, it may be added, of the "sensation" system now in fashion. These costly spectacles will not pay unless exhibited for so many hundred nights. Sight is a much more costly sense than hearing; the eye is more extravagant than the ear, as any manager knows; but no manager has discovered as yet,—none at least have had the courage to act on the discovery,—that the mind is the cheapest of all to entertain. This we will understand presently. But as to this decay, what is the sense of the profession? It will tell us that "it is going to the bad;" that the stage is going down, but that actors are flourishing. Salaries are high and well paid—to "stars." The profession, they will tell you, is in confusion. It is a scramble. Neither training nor genius tells. The fellow of yesterday,—raw, untutored,—has the same chance as the old hand of ten or fifteen years. Like the labourers in the vineyard, those who come last are paid as liberally as those who have worked all the day long. And it may be asked, why not? Good looks and a handsome face and a pert voice do not improve by service,—are rather in better condition the first day. A tyro of a week's standing can wear a short dress as well, if not more becomingly, than a lady who has served in the ranks. A few weeks' training will teach the steps of a break-down. In short, the physical gifts which sensation requires are found by nature.

We can make no reasonable protest against Pantomimes. They are a genuine show; belong to their proper season; and come in well as an alterative. They do not pretend to be more than they are. The great Garrick had his pantomime every Christmas. We have the associations of that cheerful season,—of the delighted row of children's faces, whose exquisite relish of the show should be a hint to the grown-up as to the class of audience whom such things were meant to entertain. Just as the conductor of the Grand Opera lays down his bâton when the ballet begins, and disappears, and another gentle-

man of inferior degree takes his place, so may the Drama gracefully gather up her dress, and sweep away with dignity during that merry time, abdicating for a few weeks in favour of her Cinderella sister.

The truth is,—and we have been approaching this gradually,—the proper entertainment of the drama has passed away. The delightful amusement that used to be known as “the Stage” is not with us now. It is gone ; and with it the associations, the tone of mind and training which led audiences to enjoy it so exquisitely. Instead, the eye is feasted and the ear. The vulgar enjoyments of the senses are gratified. Scenery and accompaniments, which in the old days were merely a set-off, an adornment, have usurped the chief place. We are in an utterly false groove. As was said at the beginning, we are no longer amused, simply because we have given up the true “stage,” and have gone after a pure fiction and sham,—a series of costly shows. Sight-seeing in cities is, as we all have found, the most wearisome thing in the world.

What is the true foundation of theatrical enjoyment ? It is found in the picture of human life,—the play of mind on mind, of passion on passion, of wit on wit, set off by shrewd observations and elegant treatment. It is the spectacle of mental action. The old Greeks understood this perfectly, and had the finest principle for the tragedy in the world, based on the Pagan belief that soul was the creature of destiny, and at the same time possessed the exercise of this free will. Here were elements for a splendid dramatic struggle ; the good man struggling to do what was right, exercising his will, sacrificing his inclination, and yet at the same time forced on to destruction by the secret unseen power of destiny acting on events and circumstances. Such a struggle would absorb an audience whose faith was in such a contrast. The whole city looked on in those vast amphitheatres, and from these masters we can learn the true subordinate position of scenery. They had one grand scene, which was invariably the outside of a temple, splendid and dignified, a sort of link between the dramatic and real life,—not wholly real nor wholly scenic. Indeed, reverting for a moment to the topic we have left, it may be said the more ambitious and perfect scenery becomes, the more narrowly and minutely it attempts to reproduce nature, the more does it bring about a sort of désillusionment. The surprising elaborateness, instead of satisfying, challenges the doubts of the spectators. It is so well done that it must be unreal. The true position of scenery, as associated with the drama, is indicative ; it should travel no higher than a general effect ; and I firmly believe that a good play should not be set off by anything more ambitious than an interior of a drawing-room or a cottage, a forest, a street,—all elegantly done of their kind, but more or less conventional. Elaborate set pieces,—mimicries of waterfalls, fires, drownings, &c.—should be all relegated to scenic pieces in art, to show off such tours de force. They should be subsidiary.

This can be very well illustrated by an instance taken from the

decoration of pottery, and the law which regulates that branch of art. We often see a whole dinner-service "illustrated," as it were, by painters of eminence ; every plate set down before the guest having a fine landscape in the centre. This is admitted to be an entirely false system, for the result is not a decorated plate, but a landscape painted on a plate. The plate has sunk into a secondary object ; it has been devoured by what was meant to adorn it. So with scenery and the drama. And instead of the former being used so as to set off the latter, the dramatic artist is now set to work to put together a few characters and dialogues to set off the scenery and effects.

The bearing of this fatal corruption on "the music-hall question," which is now attracting attention, is more direct than would be supposed. It is the very decay of the stage that has brought theatres to the degradation of being threatened by the competition of such places. The truth is, it is the theatres which have encroached on the music-hall business ; and as they have descended to the competition, they must bear the consequences of defeat. The music-hall is quite *dans son droit*. It provides a class of show which appeals to the eye and ear,—which requires no exertion of the mind, no attention even,—which is so bold in outline as to allow of eating and drinking and conversation going on at the same time. The real drama, true comedy, and tragedy,—observe, not the buffoonery of our existing comic dramas, which have no story and no dialogue,—require the most perfect silence and attention to follow the plot and the delicate wit of the dialogue. Mind, as well as eye and ear, must be kept at work. Here is the distinction that should keep music-halls and theatres ever distinct. Both would flourish. But on the present system,—with a sensation piece running, with tremendous scenic effects, and a plot that appeals to the eye,—the pots and glasses and little tables might be present in the pit, and do very little harm. Such theatres are half music-halls already.

The palmy days of the drama were the days of the good old comedies, beginning perhaps about a hundred and twenty years ago with Garrick's management of Drury Lane. When we see that under his judicious reign of nearly thirty years, everything rose from the most utter chaos into order ; that fine actors were trained, fine plays written for the fine actors to act, and fine and never-failing audiences came to see the fine plays which the fine actors acted ; and that the moment he retired, and the wayward Brinsley took up the reins, disorder and decay set in once more, it is impossible not to come to the conclusion that judicious management has much to do with the control of the public taste. Actors and actresses, with the exception of the few who have to struggle against their own system,—where are they ? Good acting lies buried under the heavy folds of cumbrous scenery. There is no school, no training, no serving in the ranks, as the old actors did. As I have shown, such is not wanting for the sensation

pieces. There is no opportunity to train good actors, for when a piece "runs" three-quarters of a year there can be no training. In the real palmy times of the drama a piece ran at most nine nights together; but it was judiciously put into the répertoire and played at short intervals during the season. In a theatre like Garrick's Drury Lane, with a staff of clever actors, and a large staff too, each one had his department and round of characters;—all would have ranked as "stars" now;—and each night of the week brought a different play, perhaps different actors, and an infinite variety. For this too is one of the features and healthy conditions of the drama,—constant change,—and it trains while it amuses. We may look back to the cast of the "School for Scandal" on its first night with a sort of despair, and think with wonder what acting must have been, with performers like King, Gentleman Smith, Jack Palmer, Yates, Parsons, Dodd, Aikin, Farren, Abington, Pope, and Hopkins. Fortunate indeed the play of which it has been said, that no new performer ever appeared in any one of its parts, who was not inferior to the person who played it originally. All these had been trained at Drury Lane, and formed in a correct school,—a school that insisted on principles of judicious, bold, yet regulated expression. Absolutely in our time has been lost, with the other good histrionic things, the art of filling the house with the voice, and of making the features play. Above all, too, has been lost or forgotten the art of making words tell,—the weighty, yet natural way of delivery which comes of study, play, practice. We may see traces of this sort of delivery in the few old actors who were so brought up in the traditions of the old school, and whose delivery of a single sentence seems to make it tell in quite a surprising way. The old school of humour is quite gone. The modern fashion is like all the rest, addressed to the eye. A modern farce relies on a ridiculous merry-andrew dress, forced catch-words repeated again and again, a kind of rapid pattering from the throat, in a grotesque twang, a speaking out of the corner of the mouth, and abundant "gag." All is absurd, exaggerated buffooning, and out of nature. This is broad modern farce. The French farce lies in comic but not very far-fetched situations,—like that in "Box and Cox"—which is carried off by surprisingly natural acting and an understood air of burlesque. We steal these things, vulgarise them into downright earnest, and force incidents which are natural to French life and manners into British dress and habits to which they are wholly foreign; turning the light French blagueur,—a Charles Jules,—into a vulgar Mr. Tittimus in pink and blue trousers.

If we look at Zoffany's portraits, or at pictures of scenes from plays which he painted, we can catch a faint notion of what was the principle of humour then. It was purely intellectual; it was unconscious. The Garrick face in *Abel Drugger*,—all stupid delight, joy, expectation, and vanity,—shows what a surprising power of expression he

had, and how much could be done by the face. There was an absurd or ludicrous situation, and the actor threw himself into it, and aimed at being perfectly and naturally in earnest, striving to exhibit a real terror and genuine alarm, which is the true secret of a comic situation. Our present comic rule is to exhibit comic pantomime in any crisis,—something grotesque, but inappropriate.

There is a well-known essay of Lamb's on the artificial comedy of the last century, in which he deals with the delicacies of the playing in the "School for Scandal," and which shows fatally that we have not the drama now. It gives us a faint glimpse of what acting was, and it may be confessed that to see it in the hands of one of our existing performers,—to whom, no doubt, it is unfamiliar,—would be almost amusing. It certainly would not be his notion of acting. There were refinements then in playing that we never dream of now. "When I remember," says Charles Lamb, speaking of Jack Palmer, "the gay boldness, the graceful solemn plausibility, the measured step, the insinuating voice, the downright acted villainy of the part, so different from the pressure of conscious actual wickedness—the hypocritical assumption of hypocrisy, I must needs conclude the present generation of play-goers more virtuous than myself, or more dense. . . . A player with Jack's talent, if we had one now, would not dare to do the part in the same manner. He would instinctively avoid every turn which might lead to unrealise, and so to make the character fascinating. He must take his cue from his spectators. . . . John Palmer was twice an actor in this exquisite part; he was playing to you all the while that he was playing upon Sir Peter and his lady. . . . The pleasant old Teazle, King, too, is gone in good time. His manner would not have passed current in our day. . . . Joseph Surface, to go down now, must be a downright revolting villain,—no compromise. His first appearance must shock and give horror. Oh, who that remembers Parsons and Dodd,—the wasp and butterfly of the 'School for Scandal,' and charming, natural Miss Pope, the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy,—would forego the true scenic delight,—the escape for life, the oblivion of consequences, the holiday barring-out of the Pedant Reflection,—those Saturnalia of two or three brief hours,—to sit instead at one of our modern plays?" I repeat, is not all this,—and there are many pages of this exquisite analysis,—utterly unintelligible to our modern actor, —certainly to the play-goers? "The escape from life," or "holiday barring-out," is not to be found at the play-house. I say again, this delicate refining on refining is a lost art. Managers and actors will say, We have tried comedies and pieces of this intellectual sort; they fail, and do not draw. The reason is, they are not acted; the parts are played according to the conventional canons of our "sensation" times.

In those days London audiences were not literally shut out of their

own theatres by one piece keeping possession of the house for months. I open one of Geneste's wonderful ten volumes,—monuments of laborious industry,—and choose a place at random. The following is a month's bill of fare :—The Beggar's Opera (Miss Pope); Macbeth (Garrick and Mrs. Barry); London Merchant; Clandestine Marriage (King); Mourning Bride; Rival Queens; Richard III. (Garrick); Merchant of Venice; School for Lovers (Mrs. Baddeley); Padlock (Dibdin and Bannister); All in the Wrong; Suspicious Husband (Garrick); Zara; As You Like It; The Revenge (Holland); The Stratagem; Much Ado about Nothing; Cymbeline (Miss Younge); The Wonder (Garrick); Othello; Artaxerxes; Tamerlane. Those were the days of entertainment! No wonder the stage entered largely into social life; no wonder there were good houses, and that people could talk of "going to the theatre" with enjoyment.

But leaving actors, and looking to the plays that used to be written, a feeling almost of despair will come upon us. Going to the library, and taking down even a few of these pieces, we shall be astounded at the store of wit, gaiety, and, above all, of humour. Putting what is now written beside them, the writing, as well as the acting, would seem to be a lost art. What brightness, what briskness and gaiety, even where wit was wanting! The collection of characters, the tide of humour, all in the key of Fielding and Steele,—which turns on character writing, not on the poor quiddities of punning and catch-words,—is indeed surprising. The gallery of portraits is long, and painted in the freshest, clearest colours. Each character is round and distinct; or even where there was a failure or inferiority, there was the attempt at being round and distinct. There were characters for actors to play, and actors to play the characters. Even now, when the drama makes a faint attempt at rally, it takes the shape of story, not of character,—an utter forgetfulness of what is the true function of a play, that oft-quoted holding a mirror up to nature and not to the novel or story-book. For what does nature show us in common life? Not these extraordinary and exceptional adventures, but character, and its operation on other characters, which, artfully suspended or checked, constitutes the true secret of dramatic interest and amusement.

What a series, I say again! Colley Cibber,—so fresh, bold, and full of spirit, with his pleasant "Careless Husband," whose admirable Lord Foppington and fashionable people, seem to have furnished the whole tone and treatment for the "School for Scandal." The gaiety and intellectual bustle,—for the plots are not very strong,—are as natural as can possibly be conceived; and the whole always sparkles with good humour and good things, not ostentatiously introduced, but flowing naturally from the cheerfulness of the characters. Where can we now find dialogue like this?

"*Lady B.* Why, what would you have one do? For my part, I would no more choose a man by my eye than a shoe—

"*Lady E.* But I'd no more fool on with a man I could not like than I'd wear a shoe that pinched me.

"*Lady B.* Ay; but a poor wretch tells me he'll widen them, or do anything, and is so civil and silly that one does not know how to turn such a trifle as a pair of shoes or a heart upon a fellow-creature's hands again."

The reader will see there is nothing forced in the introduction and sustaining of this pleasant metaphor. It is merely the natural flow of spirits of two lively ladies. So, too, when Lady Easy says that a lady's favours are not to be like places at court, "held for life," Lady Betty Modish replies that "no, indeed, for if they were, the poor fine women would be all used like wives, and no more minded than the business of the nation." So with Lord Foppington, who talks of "bombarding a woman's mind," and adds that "a fine woman, when she's married, makes as ridiculous a figure as a beaten general marching out of a garrison." So with "*The Provoked Wife*," written with the most extraordinary vigour and spirit,—every line of the dialogue, character. We may pass to that wonderful clergyman's play, "*The Suspicious Husband*," which Johnson seems to have considered as excelled by no comedy of the century, and to which he placed Goldsmith's play equal. The brightness, gaiety, and spirit were admirable; and it is surprising no manager has thought of reviving it. Its pendant,—and quite as good,—is "*The Clandestine Marriage*," which may be called Garrick's, and was all but written by Colman to his dictation. This, too, would repay revival; it would be as fresh as the morning, inspiriting as mountain air; and two newer and more spirited characters than Lord Ogleby and Mrs. Heidleberg could not be conceived. Colman's own "*Jealous Wife*," in which Garrick also had a share, is excellent. Macklin's "*Man of the World*," with Sir Pertinax, is familiar to our generation. What a store of characters and humour in all Foote's pieces, which run off as boisterously as the fun of a lively rattling Frenchman at a supper-party! What a variety! what "fun!" what pleasant reading even! We have Goldsmith's two unique comedies, alas! only two; Sheridan's "*School for Scandal*" and his "*Rivals*;" Cumberland and Mrs. Sheridan, Mrs. Cowley and Mrs. Centlivre, General Burgoyne and Arthur Murphy, with his capital "*Way to Keep Him*," "*All in the Wrong*," "*Know your Own Mind*," and "*The Upholsterer*." But if these pieces are so good and substantial, if they are really fine works, it must be recollected that the writing of a play was then a different thing from what it is now. Any one who turns over Garrick's vast correspondence will see what a serious and important business the writing of a play was. Author, manager, and actors had all to be considered and consulted. Whole acts were condemned and thrown out. Scenes were re-written and new situations contrived. The preparation was often spread over years. And

what is a most important proof of the character of the composition, its real value to the author was from the sale of the copyright,—the piece being written to be read as well as to be seen. Goldsmith and other writers received large sums from this source. Even the smaller fry fell into the tone of the good models before them, and got up a showy dash and spirit and wit that was respectable. How few have heard of Mrs. Griffith, and yet she wrote a very spirited comedy. As I have said, these were the days when we could amuse ourselves at the play-house. There we were diverted with the strange side of human nature—those turns and crannies of the human heart, the oddities of our species, which it is not our luck to fall in with, or we have not time to look for or think about, which skilled men put before us.

Mr. Thackeray has somewhere a pleasant burst of gratitude to Fielding and such writers, whose *Amelia* and *Tom Jones*, and *Parson Adams* and *Uncle Toby*, are as real to him, or at least as well known to him, as *Bayard*, or *Richard I.*, or any other figure of history. They have been as much living characters;—they are as historical to us as persons who have lived and died. But on the same principle, Mr. Hardcastle and Lady Teazle, Sir John Falstaff and the other figures of the stage, have a better vitality; for we seem to see them in the flesh and blood, with the voice and bearing, with their humours and weaknesses, with their dress and gestures.

Now that we have finished with this rather dismal dramatic prospect, it may be asked, what is recommended? Is there no remedy? Can nothing be done? It is only to be answered that the reform must come, if it come at all, gradually. The fault is to be distributed among the critics, writers, players, manager, and audience, and all are more or less accountable. Every one sees now the helplessness of the public in the matter of criticism. They have grown to be so spoon-fed, to rely so much in matters of judgment on their daily and weekly guides, that they have become incapable of judging for themselves. This naturally has thrown an enormous power into the hands of those who guide them, which in their turn may be directed by other influences, not altogether intellectual. The audience should exercise a little of its old independence,—learn to be pleased or displeased, without being told when or why. Advertisement now takes the place of dramatic merit, as it does in the case of merchandise; and a piece well advertised by criticism and the like means, is now a true success. Managers should have the courage to go back by degrees and bring out pieces of the good old sort, and actors should study such pieces. That such would soon "pay" there can be no doubt. There should be some classification of theatres, and burlesques and "sensation" things confined to proper houses of their own. And very soon we might look for the return of those "palmy days of the drama" which seem to belong to the mythology, and find ourselves enjoying a hearty laugh and rich entertainment at our theatres.

P. F.

THE MILITARY ARMAMENTS OF THE FIVE GREAT POWERS.

THERE was no more striking feature in the Paris Exhibition this year than the display in every department of material of war. From the outermost limits of the enceinte to the very inmost circle, implements of destruction were to be found. Side by side with the most delicate fabrics of the loom, or the machines that belong essentially to the arts of peace, might be seen the grim muzzle of a cannon, or the little less deadly breech-loading rifle. The circle of the "useful arts" teemed with guns and projectiles; portable arms were classed with "clothing." The greatest steel manufacturer in Europe showed, as his chief triumph, a monster piece of ordnance; and the iron workers of every country seemed with one accord to have converted their ploughshares into swords. To those who remember the first Exhibition in 1851, where weapons of war scarcely held a place, the contrast was almost startling. And if we look deeper than the mere surface, and consider what is the real significance of this curious outward change, we find all the great nations of Europe vying with each other in the improvement of the arts of destruction, and their rulers striving to turn whole generations of men into trained soldiers. All this can have but one meaning; this, namely, there is no trust between state and state, and in an age of so-called civilisation, might, instead of right, is daily becoming more and more the law of international society.

In this peculiar condition of affairs, the study of the armaments of foreign powers becomes of vital importance to every Government; and accordingly each has done its best to ascertain all about its neighbour's military arrangements, while endeavouring, more or less carefully, to conceal its own. In this country we made a few feeble attempts to conceal our earlier improvements, and the gun factories were at one time closed even against officers of artillery, when the Armstrong guns were being made. But the useless effort was soon abandoned; and now we make little or no secret of our improvements in manufacture. Our experiments are thrown open to the public; foreign officers are afforded every facility for examining our arsenals and workshops; and a healthy criticism of our military administration is constantly going on in Parliament and the press. France keeps a tighter hold over her journalists, and strives to conceal all details from the eyes of the curious, keeping even the officers of the

French army in many respects in the most complete ignorance. But in these days secrecy can hardly exist. In the words of one of the ablest of French writers, himself a soldier, who has lately criticised with admirable justice the proposed scheme for reorganisation of the French army ;—in these days, when nations live, as they now do, in the midst of perpetual interchange of communication and of unlimited public information, mystery in regard to new inventions and improvements is both useless and impossible. It is the law of the age that we either know to-day, or shall know to-morrow; and those armies will be the best advised that, in a perfectly open manner, submit their ways and means to the freest discussion, comparing them with those of other nations, which it is their bounden duty to study with the utmost care.

Perhaps there could be no more forcible example of the two systems—frankness and concealment—than that afforded by Prussia and Austria during the late campaign in Germany. While every facility was afforded by the Prussians to the foreign officers who accompanied them to the front for studying not only the nature of their armament, organisation, and administration, but even the disposition of the troops and the plans of the campaign, the Austrians pursued the “ostrich system,” and studiously withheld every particle of information. It is matter now almost of certainty that the Prussians knew better than any officers of the Austrian army, except perhaps the immediate head-quarter staff, the strength, condition, and position of the Austrian troops. When the dire disaster of Koenigratz overtook him, Benedek withdrew his rigorous orders on the subject of secrecy; and to judge by what one sees at Paris, there is now the most remarkable frankness in regard to the Austrian military armaments,—a frankness contrasting with the reserve of France. The Prussian and Russian Governments exhibit little or no material of war; but Krupp, the great steel manufacturer of Essen, may be taken as the expositor of their systems of artillery; and ample information concerning their armaments has been at one time or other collected from different sources. We have now military attachés at the Courts of the great Powers; but they seem, as a rule, to be kept a good deal in the dark, being looked upon, perhaps, somewhat in the light of professional spies; and the information which they send home is always kept so private by the authorities as not to be publicly available. Other sources of information, however, exist,—such as the published accounts of the annual tours made by artillery officers on the Continent. This year, France has been their field; last year, Russia; and the preceding year, Austria and Prussia. From one or another of these reports, and from further information which it is not necessary to particularise, we propose to place before our readers a slight sketch and comparison of the armaments of the five great Powers.

And first, as regards the artillery, the importance of which as a principal arm is now universally acknowledged,—the lead in the

introduction of rifled field-guns was taken by France. The present Emperor is himself an artillerist of no mean order. He has written the best history of artillery that has yet seen the light; but, while examining the past, he looked forward, and saw that changes were needed. First, he introduced a powerful smooth-bored shell-gun, known as the Napoleon gun, throwing a 12-pound projectile, which superseded the mixed batteries of guns and howitzers formerly employed, thus simplifying the equipments, and obtaining uniformity in every gun in the field. At this time, however, the advantages to be derived from the employment of elongated bullets with rifled firearms had not become fully apparent. The "carabine à tige," invented by Colonel Thouvenin, with the elongated bullet of M. Delvigne, were given to the French army, in Africa, as early as 1846; but there were so many drawbacks connected with this system, such as the liability of the pillar to breakage, and the fatigue to the soldier in ramming down, that rifled arms did not seem destined to play any great part in war. But when, by the invention of M. Minié, the expansion of the bullet into the grooves of the bore had no longer to be effected by the sheer muscular force of the soldier, exerted through the ram-rod, but was performed with absolute certainty by the action of the gas from the powder on the cup at the base of the bullet, then the great advantages of accuracy and long range became evident. At first the rifle was restricted to certain special regiments, and the old smooth-bore held its ground in the bulk of the army; but, at last, it gave way, and the whole of the troops were provided with long-range arms of precision. Then arose an outcry that the days of artillery were numbered. It was asserted that with rifles which would make accurate practice at a thousand yards, gun detachments would be picked off man by man; for the fire of smooth-bored field-artillery was not effective at very long ranges, and the guns, in order to do any execution, must come within reach of the long range arms of the infantry. But the principle which had gained such great things for the foot soldier might also surely be turned to the benefit of the artilleryman, and guns, like muskets, might be rifled, and discharge elongated projectiles. The first to seize this idea and utilise it was the Emperor of the French. With little delay he introduced rifled field-pieces into his army; and the bronze "canon de 4 rayé," introduced into the French service in 1858, played its part in the Italian campaign of 1859, and in the open ground overpowered the Austrian smooth-bored artillery. The French batteries engaged in this war were not all armed with these guns; but those that were gave immense advantage to the French at the battle of Solferino. At 2,500 yards they played with considerable effect on the village; at an almost equally long range they stopped an Austrian column from turning the Sardinian right. At one point, a battery of Austrian horse artillery was sent with some of Mensdorff's cavalry to cover the

retreat of an overmatched Austrian battery. An eye-witness relates that they had hardly got within 1,700 yards, when of six guns, five were dismounted. Another battery was sent up; in one minute from starting, three guns were dismounted, and a great number of horses killed. The effect of these rifled batteries would probably have been even greater, had not the fuses of the shells frequently failed, owing to their defective manufacture in the great hurry and pressure before the campaign.

Rifled artillery was now destined to become a part of the armament of every European power; but all set to work in different ways to obtain it. The French had every reason to be satisfied with what they had got, and they wisely resolved upon retaining the guns that had served them so well. The bronze muzzle-loading "canon de 4 rayé," rifled on the "système la Hitte," with six angular grooves, and firing projectiles with zinc buttons, is now, as it was in 1859, the recognised field-gun of the French service. For guns of position and siege guns, the Napoleon 12-pounder shell-gun and others have been rifled; and though they can hardly be considered first-class guns, being rather too light in proportion to calibre, and thus recoiling with too much force, they are good and serviceable.

Austria had learnt a lesson from her opponent. While the war was going on, she had striven to arm her gunners with copies of the very gun which her adversaries had used with such deadly effect against her. But the campaign was of short duration, and long before any number of these guns had been completed, the peace was concluded which cost her Lombardy. And now, by dint of hard study and careful experiment in the laboratory, an Austrian officer had, as it seemed, brought to great perfection a substance that was to supersede gunpowder, and give new superiority to artillery. Baron von Lenk had long been engaged in studying the manufacture of gun-cotton, invented some years before by Schönbein; and, abandoning the French system, the Viennese military authorities commenced to arm their batteries with guns specially designed by Lenk for this substance. But it soon appeared that there were terrible drawbacks to this fair-seeming innovation, and that more study and more experiment would be required before it could be safely substituted for the long-tried powder, all too hastily discarded. So Austria again changed her system, and introduced the pattern of field-gun now employed by her, and which did its work right well in the war of last summer. It is very similar to the system introduced by Lenk for gun-cotton, but varies in form so as to suit the altered cartridge. Like France, Austria uses bronze for her field-guns; but they are rifled on a peculiar method, adopted by this nation alone. Circular eccentric grooves are cut in the bore, and the projectiles, coated with a mixture of tin and zinc, have ribs along their surface corresponding in form to the grooves cut in the gun. Like France, too, Austria

employs muzzle-loading field-guns, and the same piece is used both by her horse artillery and field batteries, but drawn by a greater number of horses when required to move at the rapid pace of horse artillery. The bore of her field-gun is very little smaller than that of the French piece, and the same projectiles are used : shrapnel shells, designed to burst in front of a line of troops, when the shell opening gently, the bullets continue their onward course,—and common shells, intended to burst explosively among the enemy, and deal destruction by their splinters. Case shot, too, are carried with the guns, and used at short ranges, issuing as a shower of bullets from the mouth of the cannon.

While the French and Austrians have thus adhered to bronze muzzle-loaders, the Prussians, Russians, and ourselves have gone on quite a different principle for our field-artillery. We all had bronze muzzle-loading smooth-bores ; but, instead of rifling them, we all seem to have arrived at the conclusion that bronze was too soft a metal to be really efficient for rifled guns, and to have sought elsewhere for a metal suited to our requirements. Theoretically we were right ; practically we were wrong. That is to say, bronze will not last so long for rifled guns as iron or steel, as it will wear away by reason of its softness ; but it will answer well enough for a reasonable length of time ; and had we, for instance, in this country been content at starting with rifling our old guns, we might have sought at our leisure to find the very best among the systems which time, and the value of the prize to be competed for, would have been certain to produce. What we did in England was this :—penetrated by the idea that a breech-loading system was better than any known muzzle-loading plan, seeing on the horizon the signs of a storm brewing on the Continent, knowing the necessity of having rifled guns, and that at once, we accepted in its entirety the only complete system of artillery offered : breech-loading guns built up in such a manner as to ensure extreme strength, projectiles possessing immense superiority over any others at that time known, at all events in this country, and fuses suited to this peculiar system of breech-loading rifled gun, in which the old fuses were no longer available, for the flame that used to ignite could no longer reach them. The very complication of the breech-loading system of the guns and of the shell, and the mechanism of the fuse, approaching to the delicacy of an astronomical instrument, had a charm that beguiled, for it was considered that war was no longer to be rough and ready work, but guided and aided in every step by the lamp of physical science. And so, when Mr. Armstrong brought forward his beautiful complete system of artillery,—for beautiful it is, if too complicated in its details,—he was received with open arms. The old establishments in the Arsenal at Woolwich for casting guns were broken up, and new buildings sprung up on all sides for the construction of the Armstrong built-up guns, with their coiled tubes of bar iron, and forged breech-pieces made from solid slabs. That

system we still retain, almost exactly as we first accepted it. The guns have had little or no alteration; steel has taken the place of coiled iron for the inner tube; wrought iron has taken the place of steel for the vent-piece. The projectile, the wonderfully ingenious segment shell, by many considered the best projectile existing for field service, still holds its own. Available as solid shot, if need be, as common shell, or in some measure as shrapnel shell and case, it has peculiar merits of its own. But like every other Jack-of-all-trades, it is master of none. It is not as efficient as any one of the projectiles named; so case shot have been introduced, invented by Lieutenant Reeves, and Colonel Boxer's shrapnel is trying hard to push the segment shell altogether out of the limber-box. It has not yet succeeded, and meanwhile Armstrong's original fuses, modified repeatedly by other inventors, still afford the necessary aid to the projectile that is needed to produce its deadly effect.

This Armstrong gun of ours was tried in March, 1865, in comparison with the French field-gun, and it was found that our 12-pounder, the weapon of our field-batteries, exceeded considerably, while our 9-pounder, the weapon of the horse artillery, equalled the French gun both in range and in accuracy. As the French gun makes good practice at 8,000 mètres, we need not complain of the gun which we have got. It is true that a committee of superior artillery officers which lately assembled pronounced an opinion in favour of muzzle-loaders over breech-loaders, on the ground of their greater simplicity of construction, and freedom from liability to derangement; and we should probably be better off if we had a first-rate muzzle-loader, such as we now understand how to produce; but the gun as it stands did good service in very rough work in China and New Zealand, and stood well enough, while in range and accuracy it is all that can be desired. It was wise, then, of the Duke of Cambridge to express his opinion, as he has done, that the trifling advantage that would occur on a change would be more than balanced by the enormous expense to be incurred by a sudden transformation, or the complication of stores and drill that would arise from a gradual replacing of the guns. And so we shall for the present, at all events, stick to what we have got. The Commander-in-Chief gave another reason for deprecating a change, namely, that other great powers were armed and arming with breech-loaders.

This is the case with both Prussia and Russia. Both have adopted breech-loading field-guns, with projectiles coated with lead, as we have; but whereas our guns are built up of wrought iron, or of steel cased in wrought iron, they have both trusted entirely to steel alone. Russia seems to have followed the lead of her western neighbour; and Prussia's decision to pin her faith to steel is probably due to the fact of her possessing at Essen, in her Rhenish provinces, the greatest steel works in the world, those of Herr Krupp. This establishment,

which has existed for forty years, has gradually been developed and increased, so that each year from its origin has seen it extended by an addition of a sixth to a third of its former size. The works now cover some 450 English acres, of which 200 are under roof. Eight thousand men are employed at the works, and 2,000 more at Herr Krupp's coal mines near Essen, his furnaces on the Rhine, or his iron pits on the Rhine and in Nassau. The value of the yearly production of the works is upwards of a million and a half English pounds sterling. Herr Krupp's reputation for the management of cast steel is unrivalled ; and he has overcome, in the most extraordinary manner, the difficulties attending the manufacture of very large ingots of steel. To him the Prussians have gone for the material of all the field-guns in their service ; to him Russia has had recourse. Both nations employ the same field-gun, that known as the 4-pounder because the weight of its spherical shot would be 4 pounds ; the actual weight of its shell is about 9 pounds, the same as that of our horse artillery gun. The Prussians have a steel 6-pounder, throwing a shot of about 14 pounds weight, for their gun of position, and both they and the Russians have rifled their bronze 12-pounders for the same purpose, which, like the French gun, would throw 25-pound projectiles. We, in England, have 20-pounder batteries of position, and we should employ 40-pounders wherever the country would permit of their movement.

Each of these field-guns of Krupp's is made from one solid ingot of cast steel, drawn out and forged under the hammer, and then bored, turned, and rifled by the Prussian Government at the gun-factories at Spandau, near Berlin, or by the Russians at the arsenal of St. Petersburg. As regards the method of closing the breech, the Prussians have a thousand guns on the well-known Wahrendorff system ; but that which has been their service construction, and which was employed in the Bohemian campaign, is known as Krainer's double-wedge system. It has not been found thoroughly satisfactory, and is now about to give place to a patent system of Krupp's, exhibited in a 4-pounder gun at Paris this year, and combining simplicity and strength. The Russians have adopted this system definitively, preventing all escape of gas by the use of the Broadwell ring, which acts like the Bramah ring in a hydrostatic press. They have also wisely resolved no longer to put their trust in a foreign manufactory alone for material for ordnance, and have started steel works about four miles from St. Petersburg, known as the Aboukhoff works. It will go hard with them, however, to equal Krupp's skill in the management of this metal.

Our guns do not appear to have been actually tried in competition with the Prussian steel gun. As regards range and accuracy, there would probably be little to choose. We should probably have the best of it, but then our guns are heavier, which is a decided drawback. As for material, steel is uncertain ; some of Krupp's small guns, even,

have burst; and when steel does burst it flies into destructive pieces; whereas our wrought iron will rend, but not fly. Shrapnel, shell, and case are the projectiles of both Prussian and Russian field-artillery; but the Prussians spoilt the effect of their shrapnel in the late war by using them with percussion instead of time fuses. The real truth of the matter is that there is very little choice between the field-artillery of the five Powers. Their advantages and their drawbacks balance each other, and it will be a question of officers and men, more than of guns.

While France, as we have seen, took the lead in the adoption of rifled field-guns, Prussia was the first to recognise the value of breech-loading small-arms for infantry. There is no more strange chapter in the history of military armaments than that which relates the extraordinary apathy about, nay more, the aversion to the system of breech-loading arms for infantry that for long pervaded the councils of all the other European Powers. Prussia was looked upon as a monomaniac when she supplanted all her old muzzle-loading arms by the breech-loading rifle designed for cartridges carrying their own ignition, the famous Zund-nadel-gewehr, the needle-gun, which has now been as much over-praised as formerly it was decried. Strange as it may now seem, Prussia was then considered so little likely to be a troublesome neighbour, and her power was so much underrated, that it was considered little matter how she was armed, so long as there was no great pre-eminence shown by any one of the other Powers. But the needle-gun was actually tried and condemned, at all events by France and England. The arguments which carried the day in our own country may be looked upon as a fair specimen of those that prevailed elsewhere. In the first place our authorities were fully imbued with the idea that it was highly dangerous to employ cartridges containing their own principle of ignition, and in which consequently detonating composition must be contained together with gunpowder. In the next place rapidity of fire, the chief point of superiority of a breech-loader, was not only not recognised as an advantage, but was positively set down against breech-loaders as one of their disadvantages. It was argued that it is, even with muzzle-loading arms, a difficulty to make a soldier reserve his fire, and that if a weapon were put into his hands which he could fire with great rapidity, he would expend all his ammunition before the crisis of the action arrived. Then the needle-gun was examined through the false medium of these notions. It was pronounced unsatisfactory, not on the grounds on which we now pass it over, as being too slow and clumsy, but as being too rapid an arm to trust in the hands of any but veteran soldiers, and as involving great danger in the storage and transport of its cartridges. But Prussia in this, as in many another point of her military system, was, unlike her neighbour, wise before the event. She trusted to the confidence that would be given to her

troops by the knowledge that they could fire three or four times to the one shot of the enemy, and that this would induce them to reserve their fire till the range was such that the superior rapidity could tell with certainty; and she knew by experiment what we contented ourselves with contradicting without a trial, that there was little or no danger in the employment of self-igniting cartridges. And so, while we held to our muzzle-loaders, as did the French and the other great Powers, she adopted for her troops of all arms the needle-gun which Herr Dreyfus had invented.

It is not, however, perfectly true to say that we had not introduced breech-loaders until quite recently. Their superiority as an arm for cavalry had been recognised, even in this country, for many years; and in order to abolish the difficulties attending the loading a muzzle-loading arm on horseback, we armed our cavalry with breech-loading carbines more than ten years ago. The carbines known as Sharp's, Green's, Terry's, and Westley Richards' were experimentally issued, the last being a thoroughly good specimen of the capping breech-loader. But with a capping arm the greatest advantages of a breech-loader are lost. With a rifle where the cartridge carries its own ignition less time is occupied; there is no fumbling for the cap with cold or wet fingers, the piece can be loaded with the least possible exposure of the body, and there never is a "miss fire" from the powder getting wet, or the nipple being choked. Still, as we have shown, these advantages were supposed to be over-balanced by the imaginary faults we have named; and it was not till the Prussian needle-gun was actually tried, and not found wanting, in the Danish war of 1864, that we woke up to the belief that the other side of the question might, after all, possibly be the right one.

Then a committee was appointed, which recommended the arming of all our troops with breech-loaders, signing its report to this effect on the 11th July, 1864. A single instance of what the needle-gun effected in the Danish war will be sufficient to show what grounds we had for this decision. We extract this from the report of the professional tour of artillery officers in 1865. At Lundby, in Jutland, a detachment of 100 Prussian infantry, commanded by a Captain Schlotterbach, was attacked by two companies of Danish infantry, supported by half a squadron of cavalry. The Prussian commander reserved his fire until his enemy was about 250 paces distant, when he commenced "quick firing," and in a very short space of time inflicted a loss on the Danes of two officers and ninety-five men killed and wounded, the casualties among his own party being only two wounded men! The attack was, of course, repulsed.

To the credit of England, it may be said that she was the first to appreciate at its true value the lesson of the Danish war. The needle-gun, though as a breech-loader with self-ignition cartridges far superior to any muzzle-loading small-arm, was wisely set aside as

too complicated and unwieldy to be adopted by us ; and, very sensibly, it was resolved to try whether our immense and costly store of Enfield rifles could not be converted into breech-loaders on some better system. Out of the competition which was invited by the Government grew the " Snider converted Enfield," which is, for the present, the arm of the British infantry. Experiments made at home had demonstrated, beyond the possibility of doubt, that cartridges carrying their own ignition could be made not only as safe, but infinitely safer, than the old pattern for muzzle-loading arms. In mercy to our readers, we will spare them the tedious details of the squabbles over the rifle itself, and the Boxer cartridge, and only remind them, with a sigh of regret, that while a paper war was being carried on, the inventor himself, Mr. Snider, died in the grip of poverty and debt—a lasting disgrace to our country, let what special pleading there may be used to excuse the fact. This is the weapon with which all our troops at home and in America are armed, and with which all the rest will soon be supplied. Let us compare it briefly with the Prussian needle-gun. It has a cartridge impervious to wet and fire-proof, while no amount of rough usage is likely to injure it so as to render it useless. The action of the arm is very simple ; there is a complete freedom from complication of mechanism, and the discharge is very rapid. Eighteen shots and more have been fired in a minute. The needle-gun has a paper cartridge, not so strong or water-proof. It is heavy, complicated in its mechanism, and liable to injury by the breaking of the needle which pierces the cartridge to ignite the fulminate. And its rate of fire is half, or less than half, that of the Snider rifle. But, wisely, we are not satisfied with this arm, if a better can be obtained ; and, accordingly, a competition is now going on for the future arm of the British infantry. Out of more than a hundred rifles sent in to compete, nine have been selected, and in this month of November they will be subjected to further trial on a large scale. It is impossible to predict which of these will be chosen, but, whichever it be, it will be even better than what we have now got.

The conversion of the Enfield rifle upon the Snider system had been actually decided upon in England one month before the battle of Koenigratz. It was not till after the Bohemian war that the other Powers became convinced of the immediate necessity for a change in their armament. The Danish war had taught Austria no such lesson as it had taught us ; or, if she had seen the value of the new weapon, she shrank, in the bankrupt state of her exchequer, from the expense attending so great a change. And so she still was halting between two opinions, and, to use the favourite phrase of our own War Department, " making further experiments," when the wily Prussian Minister seized the opportunity, and she was dragged into war with a disadvantage in her infantry armament of at least three to one. Then it was that Benedek tried to give the confidence to his troops that they should

have had by this time from another source, had the lesson of the Danish war only been properly accepted. "The enemy," he said, "have for some time vaunted the excellence of their firearms, but, soldiers, I do not think that will be of much avail to them. We will give them no time, but will attack them with the bayonet and with crossed muskets." Alas, poor Austria! why had she not been wise in time? Now her arsenals are alive. The muzzle-loading arms are being converted on the Wänzl system, exhibited by Würzer in the Paris Exhibition. The chamber is closed by a solid block, which hinges in front and throws over along the barrel, like the well-known Mont Storm system; but the arrangement is clumsy, and unnecessarily complicated with springs, always an element of weakness. The arm which she has chosen for the future is on Wörndl's system, a simple and quick small bore. But it will be long before she will have her troops all armed, for she dallied too long with other systems, trying, amongst others, two thousand of Remington's arms.

Neither the Austrian conversion nor the new arm have anything in common with the needle-gun as far as the mechanism is concerned, though the new arm is, like the needle-gun, a small bore. But France has unwisely allowed herself to be bitten with the needle system, and the Chassepot rifle, the new arm chosen for her troops, is but a modified and improved Prussian needle-gun. It is rather simpler than its parent, but has many faults. It has far too many springs, and, like the needle-gun, requires a paper cartridge not waterproof. Moreover the escape of gas is checked by the close fitting of a piece of india-rubber, and this must wear out of form far sooner than metal. Nor is the shooting of the Chassepot to be compared with our Snider converted Enfield. The French troops themselves are dissatisfied with the arm, and many prefer the old arm, which, like our own, is being converted as rapidly as possible on the Snider system, to be used with Boxer's cartridge. All the experiments instituted in this country point conclusively to the fact that the needle system cannot be considered desirable for military purposes. Comparing, then, the French arms with others, their conversion is the same as ours, and rather superior to Austria's; while their new arm is decidedly inferior to the Austrian Wörndl gun, and is sure to be left behind by any of the systems which we elect for our new weapon; but it is decidedly superior to the Prussian needle-gun, which there seems no inclination on the part of that Government to abandon. Without doubt the confidence which the Prussian army has gained in this weapon in the war of last year is worth much; and it is probably with a view to frightening his future antagonists, and giving confidence to his own troops, that the Emperor of the French is constructing these mysterious pieces, to be worked by turning a handle, which it is said can keep up a continuous shower of rifle bullets, at the rate of sixty a minute, and which, if rumour speaks truly, are to be supplied to the infantry, at the rate of two

per battalion. These are probably constructed somewhat on the plan of the American Gatling gun; for of course the story about the projectiles being thrown by centrifugal force is untrue. The secret has as yet been very well kept. It is said at Paris that the different parts are made at different factories; and that only a select few know their mutual application. Stories are afloat of Prussian officers disguised as workmen hovering about the practice ground at daybreak, when the experiments are carried on. To our mind such studious concealment argues imperfection rather than success, and these wonderfully mysterious weapons of which the world has so often heard seldom come to much in the end.

Russia is behindhand in the race for breech-loading small-arms. She is about to convert her muzzle-loaders on the Terry system, a capping arm, long since tried for cavalry carbines, and discarded, in our service; but she delays even over this. It is asserted, however, that she intends to adopt a magazine rifle, probably Laidley's, as her new weapon. If so, she will, in our opinion, take a step to which sooner or later we shall all have to come. When once the principle is thoroughly and universally recognised that the soldier is to be educated and trained up to the character of his weapon, and not that the weapon is to be kept down to suit the comprehension of the dullest and most ignorant soldier in the ranks, then the magazine rifle must come into universal use. These rifles, of which Spencer's is the best known, having been employed to a considerable extent in the American war, contain a reservoir of cartridges in the stock, from whence, by the action of a handle, six or seven, or whatever number the reservoir will hold, can be pumped up with the utmost rapidity, and discharged in succession almost instantaneously. For the critical moment, to meet a charge of cavalry, or in advancing against the enemy's line at close quarters, such a fire will be deadly in its effect; and if it be urged that the temptation to the soldier to fire away his ammunition too rapidly will be too great, we reply that he must be trained to be cool, as the Prussian soldiers are, and not to fire till he is bid so to do. The magazine need not be called upon; the arm can be used as an ordinary breech-loader for all ordinary purposes; and the soldier must be trained so to use it. He must learn to withhold the contents of his magazine till the moment when all depends on the fire that can be given in a few seconds.

Such is, in brief, a sketch of the field armaments of the five Powers. To enter on the question of heavy guns and fortresses would take more space than can be here afforded, and moreover is a question of far less moment. It is in the field that armies will now settle the differences of nations, and not behind stone or iron walls. Fortresses will still have their uses, but the Bohemian campaign has shown how the policy commenced by Napoleon of masking and leaving them behind is that most in accordance with the spirit of modern warfare.

Naval armaments form, of course, an entirely separate question. The sketch which we have given will enable a fair comparison to be made of the weapons that will be used in the event of any European war taking place before long. If, as we believe, the main issue of battles will in future, as hitherto, be decided by infantry, then we predict that the nation which shall first perfect and utilise the idea of the magazine rifle will reap the same advantage in that conflict that the Prussians gained last year by their needle-gun. But it is not by the rifle alone that success can be attained. Numbers being equal,—and it is probable that the four great continental Powers could each put into the field armies practically equal, for all would be as large as could be handled or moved to advantage,—numbers being equal, the tactics best adapted to the improvements in arms will win the day, and the great aim of tactics must now be rapidity of movement. To this end the old idea which converted the soldier into a mere machine must be abandoned. Instead of being taught that he is not to think but only to obey, he must learn to think, that the shortest way may always be followed. Instead of roundabout manœuvres, invented that every man may always hold the same place in the ranks, simpler movements must be adopted. Changes of front and flank or rear movements must be performed by the very methods which are now considered disgraceful as "clubbing" the troops, but the men must be taught not to lose their heads when they are clubbed. Prussia has taken the initiative in this, as she did in the present system in the days of Frederick. France is following in her footsteps. The others must follow sooner or later. Let us be wise and learn the lesson at once. Small as the contingent is which we can ever throw to either side, bearing only such a proportion to any other great Power's army as did the Saxon army to the Austrian or Prussian in Bohemia, it should be the best in the world. But we labour under fearful disadvantages. Other nations take the flower of the manhood of the country for their armies, and the highest and the lowest of their sons fight side by side in the ranks. Too independent to accept compulsory personal service even for our country, we yet are unwilling to pay the cost of our exemption, and instead of making the army the best of all professions, so as to attract men of intelligence and ability into its ranks, we seek only for how small a sum it is possible to get men of any stamp, and we lower our bidding till we can just fill our army with the dregs of our cities, and only raise the offer when even they cannot be drawn, even by the lies of a recruiting sergeant, into the ranks. While this continues, it is well for England that she is girt with the sea, and it is by her naval armaments that she must seek to keep up her reputation.

A SHEFFIELD WORKMAN'S WEEK EXCURSION TO PARIS AND BACK FOR SEVENTY SHILLINGS.

I HAD given up the thought of going to the Paris Exhibition, and ceased to care about it. For in the early spring death came to my home and took our only one,—a daughter; and it had been a promise to her that, all being well, we would go to Paris and the Exhibition this year, and then she would have the opportunity to be cicerone on the journey, and show that the French learned at school had not been in vain. A short illness, not thought dangerous, and the grave closed over the brightness and life of our home, and “hushed the music that gladdened us all day long.” So that the sight of “Paris” on a poster gave a pang and an unneeded stimulus to the sensitive memory of sorrow. For awhile I avoided reading them at all.

One night in August, passing along the street, I was struck with the words “Workmen,” and in smaller letters, “to Paris and back, 34s.” In a conference at home that night between self and wife, that power argued, first, that as the care of an aged sick relative,—which she would not delegate,—would keep her at home, I should have to go to see Uncle Gould in London, the fare by excursion being 14s.; second, that being a workman, it was of first importance that I should be up with the times, and that if I went to the Paris Exhibition and examined only my own trade, it would be worth the additional 20s. and the time; and, thirdly, that the change of air and scene, a strange country and new sights, would occupy the mind, if it did not soothe the sorrows of bereavement. The only condition was that I should write home every day. The power's reasoning prevailed, as it has done before and will do again, the world over, both for good and for evil.

It being passed that I should go, and the supplies voted, I began to think to what and where I was going. My notions of Paris were common to many. It was the place where Fashion resides; where crinoline was invented; where wine is the common drink, and grapes grow in the open air; where frogs and snails are eaten, and said to be good; where Sunday is still a day of pleasure for the most part, but becoming more reverently observed; where revolution is indigenous, and may start up with more than mushroom rapidity above ground at any time; where suicides abound,—a man threw himself from one of the columns while I was there; where life is lightly esteemed; where one man rules, and drives, and leads a people, who

assume, at times dreadfully, to be especially able to rule themselves ; where a newspaper cannot say what it would ; where a political meeting cannot be held. These were my not very prepossessing notions of Paris.

Having certain sanction and sympathies, I struck work ; not for price, though if that was ten per cent. more on returns, why, I'd have it. Nor to drive out a knobstick ; more steady earnest industry might do that as soon as anything. But it was a strike nevertheless. An annual strike to be recommended whenever possible. One that is not a loss to both master and workman, but a gain to both. I struck work on this occasion to see Paris and the Exhibition.

Late in August I presented my certificate and took a thirty-four-shilling workman's ticket to Paris and back, with option of breaking the journey at London, Dover, Calais, or Amiens ; and after a quick journey to Dover, and across to Calais, I stood on a foreign shore,—in France,—not knowing scarcely a word of the language. I soon found that whatever the home experience might be, the "unruly member" was for once harmless, and almost useless. I had certainly a tongue in my head, but it did not seem the right sort for here. It was indeed a feeling of helplessness and loneliness, for talk was much more embarrassing than silence. I do not think the feeling an unwholesome one, though not at all pleasant at the time. Very likely many a youngster will feel it in having the "extra" paid, and French added to his school tasks.

With temporary loss of speech perhaps one's eyes open a little wider. By pantomime and decimal coinage I managed to ascertain the price of refreshment before the train moved off towards Boulogne. I had taken the precaution of a late but substantial tea at Dover, not too near sailing time. I was thus enabled to enjoy the sail, and to go through the night without troubling the buffets.

The company in the carriage were anything but cast down. Some could speak a little, and two French soldiers were very brave in their efforts to understand and be understood. They very quietly took the "chaff" of two youths, who pretended to them that they had a better acquaintance with French than they possessed. The small hours of the night crept on, and with them a disturbed sleep, most effectually broken at Montreuil by a barrel-organ and daylight. The music almost drove the Frenchmen into ecstasies. The buffet stations where the train stopped were sources of considerable amusement. People rushed into the rooms and seized what they could get, and when the reckoning came it often did not suit. One man came back complaining that he had been charged fifteen-pence for a cup of coffee, and then the waiter made him understand he wanted something for himself. The man was sorely vexed, and told the waiter to go to the —, in the very plainest English,

It was not four o'clock, and yet many were at work in the

fields. If there are any early worms to pick in this country, the French agricultural labourer should be the bird to pick them. It is to be seen by the different character of the villages and farm-buildings, with here and there a rounded kind of castle-looking building, that you are in another country. The country houses have a more liberal provision for daylight, and not such long roofs. There were many homesteads and farm-buildings either deserted or in a most deplorable condition. There is a very large crucifix painted white on the left of the railway by a roadside. It was quite new to most of us. There is an absence of fencing to the fields, of either walls or hedges, that gives a very open appearance to the country, which is on the whole very interesting. A valley on both sides of the line a little beyond Creil is worthy of notice.

It was difficult to believe, as the train passed on, that it was Sunday morning, so quiet and peaceful at home. There was mowing and shearing, waggons laden with corn and timber, barges loading with stone, quarrymen working, and builders and bricklayers. In fact, it did not seem Sunday with anybody or anything.

If it did not on the road, it did not in Paris. The first sight outside the station was a very large placard on which was depicted the conventional devil, horns, tail, and hoofs, with the title of the "Good Devil." There may be doubt about the correctness of the likeness, but I have no doubt that it is the doing of that personage that the French workman has been cajoled out of his Sunday, and he at any rate has no reason to call him the "Good Devil." The French workman may get his holidays;—no doubt he does; but this is one that should be taken, like meals, at regular and stated times. He gets them at any time, but not regular. I thought it was to be seen in his movements. He seems as if he had the whole three hundred and sixty-five days to do his work in, and no need to hurry; an easy-going manner that looks like apathy, and not a "go in" for six days, and then rest. This applies to both country and city workmen.

With a good map and guide no one need fear going to Paris, even though the "unruly member" be suspended for the time. The names of streets are fixed up very plentifully. A careful study of the map will dispense with the services of an interpreter for ordinary purposes. One's eyes do not need to translate.

Once out of the station, we come to the test of our capacity for travelling. No longer steam, flange wheels, and rails to keep us in the right track. After a little study on the spot, and a walk of more than two miles without asking the way, I came to Place de la Bastille, near to which I secured a bed at one shilling a night,—a clean, quiet bed, but the appointments of the room and place left something to be desired. I was recommended by a townsman, who was staying there, to put up with it. It was a safe place, and the time was short. I could but put up with it, as he said he had done.* He had been a

week and had not found his way into bed. The beds were like a sofa without back, with very light covering, a square down mattress or pillow half the size of the bed, German fashion. My townsman had been lying on the top of the bed with the down mattress over him, and said, "I have managed pretty well, though I have no covering lower than the knees."

After a wash, writing home, and breakfast of coffee and bread and butter for sixpence, I set out along the Rue St. Antoine and looked in St. Paul's Church. It seems here a practice that while service may be going on in the middle of the church, and also in the small chapels round the sides, people not worshippers may walk in, sit down, or walk round and go out. It is very convenient for sight-seeing, but surely not reverent.

On past the Hôtel de Ville, Rue Rivoli, as far as the Louvre and Tuilleries, crossed the Seine to Corps Législatif, back past the Morgue to Notre Dame, which I entered, and sat in one of the clumsy rush-bottomed chairs, that did not look at all ecclesiastical; which, in fact, corresponded with nothing I saw there except the wooden shoes of a few, and their blue blouses. The chairs were placed outside the body of the church in the "promenade," with the chapels round the side. I cannot describe the place, but would walk a long way to have another hour in it. History, art, and religion are here in marked and positive forms. I esteemed it a privilege to rest awhile here, and look and listen. He that runs may read here if he can spell ever so little. Few but have heard or read of Notre Dame, and few will enter the place without that reverent feeling and tread inspired by the long and important history of a nation's great sanctuaries. Yet some, as the crowd streamed in, had to be reminded to take off their hats. Not from irreverence perhaps. One of the most reverent men I ever knew,—he is dead now,—on entering York Minster for the first time, was overpowered by the size and grandeur of the place. He was told by an attendant to "take off your hat, please; this is a holy place." He took off his hat quickly, but replied, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

It was now noon. We went to a café where there were three "Yessirs" in white ties and napkins. We had each a flat fish and bread, and a mutton chop and fried potatoes, one plate of grapes, and one half-bottle of wine, and were charged two and sixpence for both of us.

I then went into the Louvre, which was crowded with people of many countries and costumes. Here is work, and pleasant work too, for months for the lover of pictures and decorations, of antique and modern art. In a hasty walk round I recognised many old friends, familiar by engravings only, but whose originals I looked upon with something of the freedom of an old acquaintance, and the gratification too. You walk in and out, and where you will, with a

freedom that rather surprised me, showing that these people have at least the liberty to walk in palaces.

My friend was anxious to see the Champ de Mars Park. We took a 'bus along the street of palaces and shop-arcades, Rue Rivoli, and down past the Tuilleries Gardens. The Champ de Mars Park is simply a Sunday fair. Five or six very large roundabouts on the hillside, with the attraction of a barrel-organ, accompanied by two drums and a trumpet each. Punch and Judy very numerous. There was an acting show, a fat-woman show, some scores of small shops for wine and sweetmeats, shooting galleries, gambling-tables, and, in fact, a much greater number of caterers than attend the fair of a certain town with more than 200,000 inhabitants. It was a strange sight in the Boulevard de Rome, leading from the park, lined on each side with slates, men at work digging and building, a large balloon just up ; and to think it was Sunday ! I had the impression, before starting, things were better ; I found them worse than I could have believed. By the Arc de l'Etoile, and down the Champs Elysées, the fashionable drive. Amongst the trees even here,—I thought it spoiled the appearance of the place sadly,—Punch and Judy and booths have a great stronghold. This road leads into the Place de la Concorde. My experience is not great, but it is the grandest square I ever looked upon. It is a place to be satisfied with seeing. Here, as elsewhere, inside and outside, it is clear somebody with the power is determined, as much as possible, to improve the whole place. Everywhere improvements are going on. If no more is done, the Emperor has left his mark on Paris. Across the square by the Zouave Guard into the Tuilleries Gardens to Rue Rivoli. With the night travelling, and succession of sights during the day, I was weary and tired, and thought it best to make homewards. Not so H—, an old Sunday-school superintendent. He was determined to attend the English Independent chapel, near the Madeleine. Wearied and shocked with the desecration he saw everywhere, and because he was wearied, he wanted the more to go. He went, and as he entered the place the congregation were singing, "Jesu, lover of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly." The old veteran was melted to tears for the whole of the service. He had, indeed, found a sanctuary. He said he felt then that "a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand."

Monday morning, up and out by a quarter-past six. I was not an early bird, though. There were plenty of shops open, and people in them. I had a basin of milk for three-halfpence, cool and refreshing. It is examined by the Government officers as it comes into the city, and is to be had at most of the cafés. I made for the markets,—halles centrales,—and had a two-hours' stroll among the contributions from the animal and vegetable kingdoms for the benefit of Paris. The markets of a great city, showing the productions of the country, and what can reach it, are an easy and accessible source of information.

Perhaps not such a bad point to study a people from, to look at what they eat! Here, all near, are markets for meat, offal, fish, fruit, vegetables, flowers, grapes, butter, and cheese. Green figs were plentiful, and many strange fruits, the produce of warmer climates. There was a strange fruit like a bunch of green kidney potatoes. Grapes and peaches were good and cheap, and melons seemed almost a drug. I looked in at the fish-market. Why should fish require so much noise to sell it? The din was equal to Billingsgate; I was glad to retreat. Flowers were in abundance, and bouquet-making studied and practised as an art of considerable service. If any come here with the idea that the French women are small-sized and very light, they will be undeceived both in the markets and elsewhere. There are in Paris, in a considerable proportion, some of the best-fed women in Europe, I should think. This is a fact of much moment. "Madame" would weigh as much as "Mrs. Bull." In the meat market there was a tolerable supply, and of fair quality. I saw no horse that I know of. They have a very liberal age for veal; it is not killed till in the transition state. Here I met a townsman who had just come through the offal market. He says, "Sheep-trotters are tied in bundles like firewood in London. Tripe is wrapped up and tied like a clean apron. Calves' heads, pigs' feet, &c.,—they must keep them in poultices, they are so white and soft-looking. But keep out; the smell is awful."

It was time for breakfast. I had coffee, bread and butter, a "bifteck," and a small glass of brandy, for elevenpence. I don't say the steak was not horse; I don't know. But I know it was one of the best steaks I ever ate.

I went to the Exhibition by boat. To the right of the main entrance, past the refreshment-rooms, is the British workman's hall of meeting. Go there first thing to know where it is, and get a ticket of admission free. I felt much more at home after I had accidentally found it than with anything else I had met with. On the tables are catalogues, newspapers, writing materials, and water. And you may sit and hear your own language spoken. It is a boon; it is home for a few minutes.

The Exhibition is a good one, though perhaps we do not think it as good as ours. Those workmen who examine closely the French work of their own particular trade will find they are worthy, and in many instances successful, rivals. Many will be astonished at the work. Personally I have, after looking round the French department especially, a great respect for the ability of their workmen. They really can do some things better than us. Many a one, going quietly round, will receive a shock where he thought he was impregnable. Without personal encounter there will be many a confession of equality, and even of defeat, but that shall yet result in victory to come. I do not believe this stimulus will be lost on those who experience it. I

believe many will return with a determination to stir themselves to greater effort, and increase the distance where we have the superiority, and run again where there is doubt or defeat. In this peaceful but remunerative strife, the British workman will respond to the old war-cry, "England expects that every man will do his duty." Two days at the Exhibition will show that that duty is something more than resting on gained laurels.

In the higher kinds of gold and silver works the English are as good as the French, and the French as good as the English. This applies to the costly kinds that will pay for whatever amount of skill is expended upon them, our workmen in this department being able to hold their own with any. As to cheaper adaptations of electro-plate, within the reach of tradespeople, clerks, and managers, I did not, in my rapid survey, see anything like our own. Nothing like the goods to be seen in our shops, such as cruet-frames, cake-baskets, sugar-baskets, &c.; things that shall be tolerable-looking and yet within the reach of a large class; things which it must be admitted add considerably to the smartness of a household. Their cutlery is not to be despised in appearance, though for comfortable use it will be found far behind our own. Files they cut which for evenness of covering, over any surface, and perfect to the point, would be a lesson to many whom it is to be feared will never see them. Those engaged in the decorative branches will find many and very valuable hints in the French department. This is hardly necessary to say, as the decorative workman mostly pursues with the zeal of a sportsman the study of works having a bearing on his craft.

Out of the Exhibition on the side farthest from the river, to the Invalides, to know where it was, for visiting next morning. Past Corps Législatif to Rue Rivoli. "A shop-window feast" was part of my programme, and the late hours the shops keep open give ample opportunity for this recreation. Rue Rivoli and Palais Royal,—a square arcade consisting of a great number of shops,—will repay an inspection to those who would see the manufactures for every-day sale. We know that Exhibition things are not always of the usual sort. The great quantity of jewellers is surprising. The jewellery is exceedingly fanciful at times, but most I saw was good, chaste, and clear in design. Tiny watches, about the size of a shilling, or less, in bracelets, &c., are very clever and creditable workmanship. They must have purchasers, but may be looked upon as costly toys. The national trait of aptitude for light and fancy goods is here seen in a great variety of things. One would wonder who can be the purchasers of all the jewellery, even in the Palais Royal. Paris life is said to be gay; no doubt it is; but how is it with the shop-people? Open at seven in the morning to half-past nine at night, one would think somebody's times are not very gay. After half a bottle of wine I turned in well tired.

Tuesday morning I was out by half-past six. Past Imperial printing-

office to the flower market, a brilliant and imposing sight. The flowers are arranged in masses of colours, producing effects of form and combinations as pleasing as startling to those who have not witnessed the like before. One of my townsmen preferred the sight of the flower market to anything else he had seen. Here is art dealing with the most transient of raw materials. Either in a bouquet, or in the larger devices, they are very successful. It is worth ten minutes to see some of them,—from what slender materials they will produce a most presentable bouquet. Past the Post-Office,—it does not look to be the Post-Office for the Tuileries,—on to the Bank, Bourse, to Boulevard des Italiens, by Rue Richelieu to Rue Rivoli, my feeding quarters. I found a clean, cheap, and central café on the first day, and afterwards, when near enough, went there.

To the Invalides by ten o'clock. I prefer walking when the distance is not too far and the time too short. One can stay and look in at the old print-shops, turn over the portfolios at the door, and look in the window of the curiosity-shops on the Quai d'Orsay. It is a pleasant stroll down to the Invalides. I entered by the courtyard into the chapel, and saw the trophy flags of many nations that droop, still and battered, near the roof. From the chapel I passed to the tomb of Napoleon. What an old contest it is that men continue to fight with death and the grave ! To make death look a triumph, and the grave like regal repose ! This tomb is a great effort, but it is only a grand and imposing cover of the defeat. It is a grave, after all ; the end of even that almost irresistible man, in a conflict in which guards could not save, and legions could not turn the tide of battle. He was defeated, but the defeat is splendidly covered by the tomb in the Invalides. The sad truth of the "Elegy" will come :—

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
With all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The path of glory leads but to the grave."

From the Invalides out by tomb entrance to Western Station, Place de Maine, for Versailles. It is very pleasant riding on the tops of the carriages, there is such a good view of the environs of the city on this side. Then the atmosphere is very clear. From one to five, a very good idea of the palace and grounds may be obtained. This, for a palace and grounds, is equal to Place de la Concorde as a city square. It is a place that time would be more necessary in making than money, though it would take a fabulous amount of money too. Avenues of trees worth a fortune are very numerous. It is a place so extensive and grand, that it looks as if Nature for once, to please some chosen one, had condescended to work to the conventional plans of man. The palace—! But what are palaces here ? There are so many of them, and the splendours of first one and then another on the mind in a hasty run make it difficult to remember almost which is which.

Back to Western Station. On the right leads to the gardens and palace of the Luxembourg, to the Panthéon and by the Boulevard Sébastopol to Rue Rivoli. A stroll in the street at night was another intention. In a walk of three miles I saw hundreds,—at one place I made out two hundred,—of people sitting outside the cafés and wine-shops, at small round tables, drinking wine, seltz, beer, &c. They seemed very comfortable, however strange it might look to others. The wine does not seem of an intoxicating kind, though it might be efficacious in quantities. I know a glass of beer drunk in some places will either stupefy or intoxicate more than half a bottle of the ordinary wine drunk here. It seems just to lift the spirits, and has a tendency to make home and friends not quite so far off. For a quenching drink, syrups, wine, and seltz-water are very nice. The people were in very gay mood, but not boisterous; none of the ragged and dirty misery to be seen any time in our own gin-palaces. There was very good order, no quarrelling, but they seemed to be taking easy, quiet, and accustomed enjoyment. I did not see the homes of these people.

Wednesday. This was the day to return, so was off early with H—— to the fruit market, and invested five shillings in grapes and peaches, which I managed to get home in tolerable preservation the next day. It is part of the luxury of going away to bring something back. I had taken every handbill and card offered, and so I had a collection of odds and ends in veritable French. It is an event of considerable interest opening the bag or trunk after a journey. The children look on with impatient expectation. It was once the joyful right of one to have the key and open and rummage my bag to find the invariable book, box of dried fruits, &c.; but that is past now. My bag lay a day unopened this time. H—— never had any children, but he took two baskets of peaches and one of grapes. He said the trouble of taking them would be nothing to the pleasure he should have with his little nephews and nieces when he got home. He says it is one of the cheapest and most delightful luxuries that children are so soon made happy.

A look-out from the Arc de l'Etoile, and another peep into the Exhibition, was the programme for the last day. The first was done moderately early. It is a good and cheap panorama, and worth climbing the steps. I think a quarter of an hour on the top, with a map of the city, would be a good start in getting about the place. It is a real bird's-eye view. To the Exhibition I walked with increasing pleasure. I do not say that in my rapid survey I have "done" the Exhibition, but I saw most bearing on my own trade, and with the journey I am sure I had my money's worth. So much for the money I never had before. I do not remember any excursion for the distance at anything like the price.

The working classes, as far as I saw, possessed the negative virtues of being well conducted, and neat and tidily dressed. A very general expression of ingenuity in their countenances, rather than the stal-

wart force of much of our manufacturing people. Many men had blouses and trousers of blue cotton or calico, which is no doubt cool, easy, and cheap. The better class of workmen dressed as well as the same class in England. The dress of the women, for the most part, was very neat, and they looked well in it. It seemed bought for every-day wear. But who shall describe the female head-gear? Being a department conducted on special constructive principles only known to some, it is a subject not to be lightly approached at any time. There was every shape and pattern, from bare head to what appeared to be a small oblong table with the cloth laid. The intermediate designs and achievements I dare not attempt.

Nearly everything is different here,—houses, shops, signs, names, stalls, hawkers, rag-men, horses, carts, drays, carriages, dogs, and a thousand waifs and strays that will bubble up in days to come, that cannot fail to be a source of continued interest to the observer, who has not been in a foreign country before. I consider it a great event when I struck work to see Paris and the Exhibition.

To all who can afford seventy shillings,—and it cost no more,—and a week, I do not hesitate to say it will be an investment that will pay,—pay in “shop,” in experience of another people, in an enlarged horizon, in remembrance, in real knowledge; for a month’s reading could not convey as much as such a week;—in a general shaking up of the health that will leave you on the right end at last,—a shaking up that would be to many confined and hard-worked people a new lease of life.

Though I enjoyed the visit, I would not choose to be a Frenchman. So the sweetest music I heard was the quick uneasy thudding of the carriages over the sleepers, and the unadulterated English of my returning fellow-passengers,—mostly, I must say, grumbling and complaining as if they had just escaped from robbers. One man had been charged ten francs a night for lodgings only. Another had paid seven francs a night to sleep on a sofa, which he had done for more than a week. Two ladies, with a fat retriever dog each, had come for a week, and were returning on the second day, disgusted with the charges;—robbery they called it. Whether the pets, led by a light chain, had been slighted as well, I did not learn, but the disgust was at charges which included them. There was scarcely any one who had not some overcharge to complain of;—perhaps it was the national instinct on the return of speech. With caution there need not be cause for it. I was charged,—when in a hurry to catch the train to Versailles—at a café opposite the station, four shillings for lunch little better than I had in the city for fifteen-pence. It was the only time, and plenty too; but after what I heard I shall not complain. My expenses for the week were covered by the sum I have named, and what A—— calls the “noble and time-honoured institution of feeding” was liberally attended to.

The night travelling is no doubt fatiguing, but it is better as a "spree" than what keeps hundreds out o' nights, and it adds to the excitement. After a good night's rest at home, the thick crust of ideas and impressions will give way, and get talked off into something like order. Most will return, not loving France less, but dear old England more. I saw nothing that would make it more desirable to me to live there than here. It is a larger country, no doubt, but there is not, perhaps, so much room to stretch in it. One would sooner come to the end of the tether. We may not have so many palace privileges, but then we enjoy more rights. The French would no doubt be glad to exchange their privileges for more of our rights. Who would not rather have the right to "assist" at a political meeting, with free discussion, than be cajoled by an Emperor's fêtes? Who would barter the right to criticise the Government's last blunder, and show clearly how he could rectify it, for the privilege to walk in straight boulevards, or saunter through palaces, however grand they may be? Who would not rather read the unfettered daily paper than have that article cut and dried even by an imperial cook? Who would not rather work six days in England than seven in France? No! England for one, at any rate. When I hear that England is worn out and going down, I can't but say it is a thousand pities, because it is the best place in the world. So while I remember with pleasure what I have seen in a very hasty excursion, I say with a deeper love than ever, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."

ABOUT HUNTING.

WE said in our last number, when speaking of the Turf, that horse-racing might be regarded as the great national pastime of England, more especially even than fox-hunting or cricket. Now that we are about to say a few words about hunting, we are almost disposed to confess that, on this point, we have changed our mind. We doubt whether, of all our national amusements, hunting is not the most thoroughly English, and the least susceptible of being taken out of England. Of course we here include Scotland and the sister isle. As regards Ireland, we may go further, and almost express a doubt whether hunting is not more Irish than English, so thoroughly has life in that country, both rural life and town life, become imbued with a love of the sport. Horse-racing has indeed become so large a business, that it must be acknowledged to involve greater interests in a pecuniary point of view, and to be on that account the more important occupation of the two. It is moreover open to all the public. Our great racecourses are as common to rich and poor as are the Queen's highways. But nevertheless we think that hunting has more national efficacy than any other of our pastimes;—that it does more to make Englishmen what they are, and to keep them as they are, extending its influences to very many of both sexes who do not hunt themselves; and we are quite sure that there is no other national amusement among ourselves, no national amusement belonging to any other people, so incapable of exportation, so alien to foreign habits, so completely the growth of the peculiarities of the people with whom it has originated, as is the sport of hunting.

Even among the nations who are nearest to us and dearest to us,—those people who have sprung from ourselves,—the amusement is not only unpractised, but is regarded with mixed horror and wonder by those who hear of it. Of course it will be understood that we are speaking now of hunting such as it is in England; of such hunting as that we are about to describe,—and not of the pursuit of game. The pursuit of game has been the necessary occupation of all young nations, and has been continued as a recreation among most nations that have come to maturity. But that hunting of which we speak has never been able to find a settled home in the United States, in British America, or in Australia. Attempts have been made in various of our colonies,—in Jamaica for instance, and in Canada. A pack of fox-hounds was for a time established in Maryland, which, of

all the United States, is perhaps more than any other like to England in its mode of life. But it has been found impracticable to establish the sport successfully in other lands, even among men who are thoroughly English in their ways and thoughts,—even among Englishmen themselves. Here, among ourselves, it is understood that a man is to enjoy the liberty of trespassing, as opposed to the law of land, when he is following a recognised pack of hounds. That is a conviction which has been able to get itself acknowledged by no other people in the world. Perhaps the nearest approach to English hunting out of England, is that to be found in the Campagna round Rome, where a pack of English fox-hounds is hunted after the English fashion by an English huntsman. The attempt in such a locality is hardly more than a proof of the intense love which Englishmen have for the sport. There are foxes in the Campagna, and there is an open space in which liberty to ride is granted; and there are English residents. Such being the case, fox-hunting has been established there; and having once been put down by the Pope, is now again alive. And there is hunting of course in France. We have all heard how the Emperor hunts the deer at Fontainebleau, and some of us have witnessed the stately ceremony. But there is in it not the slightest resemblance to English hunting. There is no competition; no liberty; no danger;—and no equality.

The reason why this should be so,—why hunting should not exist elsewhere as it does here in England,—is easy to find; much easier than any reason why any custom so strange, so opposed to all common rules as to property, should have domesticated itself among ourselves. We are to the manner born; and till we think of it and dwell upon it, the thing does not seem strange to us; but foreigners cannot be made to understand that all the world, any one who chooses to put himself on horseback, let him be a lord or a tinker, should have permission to ride where he will, over enclosed fields, across growing crops, crushing down cherished fences, and treating the land as though it were his own,—as long as hounds are running; that this should be done without any payment made to the landowner, without any payment of any kind exacted from the enjoyer of the sport, that the poorest man may join in it without question asked, and that it should be carried on indifferently over land owned by men who are friends to the practice, and over that owned by its bitterest enemies;—that, in fact, the habit is so strong that the owner of the land, with all the law to back him, with his right to the soil as perfect and as exclusive as that of a lady to her drawing-room, cannot in effect save himself from an invasion of a hundred or a hundred and fifty horsemen, let him struggle to save himself as he may. Before he can be secure he must surround his territory by fences that shall be impregnable;—and should he attempt this, he will find that he has made himself so odious in the county,

that life will be a burden to him. It may be said that in a real hunting county active antagonism to hunting is out of the question. A man who cannot endure to see a crowd of horsemen on his land, must give up his land and go elsewhere to live. It is this national peculiarity which confines the practice of hunting to England, and makes it almost impossible for an Englishman to give to a foreigner an adequate idea of the practice. Americans when they are told of it do not altogether believe what they hear. We have known them to declare that if it be as is described, law in England is inoperative, and property not secure. When they are assured that in spite of such anarchy, in the teeth of that insecurity, land in a hunting county in England is not deteriorated in value,—that it will bring perhaps a higher price per acre than any other soil in the world that is to be used only for rural purposes,—they express themselves unable to understand how this should be the case among a people alive to the ordinary commercial relations of *meum* and *tuum*. For this reason hunting, which in England has grown up to be an English habit, remains English, and cannot travel abroad; while horse-racing, which was practised in other countries before it came to England, is now thoroughly domesticated in France, and, in an altered shape, has become a passion in America.

The chief national effect produced by hunting on the manners and habits of our rural people is a certain open-air freedom of speech which we think has sprung from the sport, though it has spread itself into districts in which hounds are not kept. Men,—especially young men,—who feel themselves altogether cowed by the chairs and tables of those above them in worldly position, who acknowledge by their very gait and demeanour the superiority of rank and wealth when they meet rank and wealth in the streets of a town, keep up their heads and hold their own among the lanes and fields, because they have unconsciously learned that a certain country pursuit, open to all classes, has the effect of making all classes for a time equal in the country. We do not mean to imply that this operates on rustic labourers, or on any body of men who are paid by wages;—but it does operate very widely on all above that standing. The non-hunting world is apt to think that hunting is confined to country gentlemen, farmers, and rich strangers; but any one who will make himself acquainted with the business and position in life of the men whom he sees around him in an average hunting-field, will find that there are in the crowd attorneys, country bankers, doctors, apothecaries,—the profession of medicine has a special aptitude for fox-hunting,—maltsters, millers, butchers, bakers, innkeepers, auctioneers, graziers, builders, retired officers, judges home from India, barristers who take weekly holidays, stock-brokers, newspaper editors, artists, and sailors. In the neighbourhood of certain large towns in which hunting has come to be the fashion, the majority of the large fields which are found there will be made up of men who come out of the town and

who belong to it. A very few days passed in watching the work of a hunting-day, in observing and feeling the ways of the men around, in hearing what is said, in seeing what is done, and in breathing the atmosphere of the field, will produce that freemasonry of which we are speaking, and teach the tyro,—not that he is to speak to whom he likes, and as he likes; in the hunting-field as elsewhere the young and the unknown must wait to be addressed by their elders, and by those who are at home on the spot, or they will hardly avoid shipwreck,—but will teach him the tone of equality which prevails, and will imbue him unconsciously with a conviction that out among the fields aristocracy is not exclusive and overbearing as he will probably have been taught to believe that it is, when met in the streets. The Master of the hunt is indeed an aristocrat,—or rather an emperor on whose shoulders you can always see that the burden of government is weighing heavily; but beneath him there is freedom and equality for all, with special honour only for him who is known to be specially good at some portion of the day's work which is then in hand. And this feeling of out-a-door equality has, we think, spread from the hunting-field through all the relations of country life, creating a freedom of manner and an openness of countenance, if we may so call it, which does not exist in the intercourse between man and man in cities. We are aware that we are here claiming for hunting a wider influence than our readers generally will allow to it. The very men who have been made what they are in England by the extension of this influence do not know why it is that they are what they are. Nay;—they do not even know that they are what they are. But they who have lived long enough to observe effects, who have lived in town and in country, and who have lived with their ears and their eyes open, will, we think, agree with us, that that riding together on terms of equality of the lord and his tenant and his tradesmen has produced in English counties a community of interests and a freedom of feeling which exist nowhere else. The butcher may still touch his hat to the lord if he be addressed, or the farmer may feel that his landlord is almost a god whom he is bound to worship; but each will know that he is sitting on his own horse, that for the moment he is absolutely independent, that he and that other, lord though that other be, have come there on the same occupation, and that when hounds are running, he need stop for no man,—unless it be for the Master or his huntsman. Let the lord take the lead of him if the lord can! There is no privilege here for rank to pass out first. Something may be allowed to a woman. Something may be allowed to age. But rank has no privilege; and wealth can afford no protection. Therefore we think that of all our national pastimes, hunting is the most essentially English.

When railroads were first becoming general in the country, there was much fear among many sporting men that they would destroy

hunting. It was clear that they would cut up and subdivide the country ; that they would carry noise and turmoil into remote spots, thereby banishing foxes ; that they would bring town near to town, thereby tending to make all the island one city ; and that they would be so fenced as to form insurmountable obstacles to straight riding. All these arguments have been found to be more or less true ; and yet railroads have done so much towards hunting, that they may almost be said to have created the sport anew on a wider and much more thoroughly organised footing than it ever held before. They have brought men, and with the men their money, from the towns into the country ; and the men and the money together have overcome all those difficulties which the railroads themselves have produced. Homes are now made for foxes, specially constructed for their convenience and welfare, in spots in which a minimum of disturbance may be expected ; special rides across and under railroads are provided ; hunting trains are arranged to take hunting men in and out of the large cities ; horses by the dozens may be seen walking in and out of their boxes with as much accustomed composure as the holder of a season ticket. Before railways were made hunting was confined to the dwellers in the country, or to the few rich and idle men who could give up their whole time to the pursuit. Now a man who cares for his health, and can be happy on horseback, may work at his desk four days in the week, and hunt the other two, sixty or a hundred miles from his home, and get back to dinner with his family. Successful men of business have availed themselves so largely of this facility for getting air and exercise, that hunting has been more than doubled, instead of being crippled by the railroads. Hunting as it is now practised could not exist without railroads, the use of which has been introduced into all hunting programmes, as it has into the programme of every other amusement and business of life.

We have not space here to give a history of hunting, nor would such a history have much charm for the general reader. It may be interesting to point out that hunting as now conducted is by no means an old established pastime. Fielding wrote his "Tom Jones" in the middle of the last century, about a hundred and twenty years ago, and we learn what hunting in England was then from the life of Squire Western. It was in its early infancy, and had hardly advanced beyond the practice of the country gentleman to ride about his own land with a few beagles in pursuit of a hare. Squire Western did not like to be alone, and he would take his young friend Tom with him ; but we hear nothing of any field being congregated, or of any others participating in the sport except a gamekeeper. Fielding, who himself had been a Somersetshire squire before he wrote "Tom Jones," knew well the kind of life which he was describing. A squire in those days went out hunting as squires some thirty years ago went out shooting,—as some squires, we hope, still continue to do,—with-

out much special preparation, and simply in search of an ordinary day's amusement. Then, as many squires were often doing the same thing, it was found convenient that three or four should put their small packs together, and that one man should be the Master and the director of the hounds. Thus a wider scope was given; for we may imagine that even a Squire Western would become tired of riding about always on his own land. And soon the biggest hunting squire in those parts would become the Master, as being the richest man,—for the practice of hunting by subscription packs seems to have been of later date. And so the thing grew, and the Master of hounds in a hunting county became a man of importance and of much weight among his fellow-squires.

It may be doubted whether men who now think that the cream of hunting is to be found only in a fast run of forty-five minutes, almost without a check, and with a kill in the open, would enjoy the sport as it existed even at the end of the last century. Hounds had not been trained to run with the speed which is now attained, nor had the profession of hunting produced men skilled in casting when the hounds themselves were at fault, as is done now. There was no great crowd, and the fox had a better chance when there were few or none to holloa to him. The hounds were obliged then to puzzle out their own quarry, or to give it up. Men were more patient than they now are, and the hounds were allowed to puzzle out their game. We hear more of the length of the days spent than we do of the rapidity of the pace, and we know that neither hounds nor horses can have gone very fast during those runs of many hours of which the accounts have reached us. Tillage was less abundant than at present, and the ground less perfectly drained. The enclosures, also, were smaller, and the fences, though perhaps easier of management, were more frequent. A continued scent to which hounds could work, was therefore probably more common,—for the draining of our lands has undoubtedly injured scent, and, as a matter of course, scent will lie on grass when there can be none on ploughed lands;—but all those adjuncts to the dogs' instincts which we possess, were wanting; and we may be assured that but little was known of that sort of pace which hunting men now consider to be indispensable to their enjoyment. Few men, probably, who are in the habit of hunting,—perhaps but few even of those who ride well to hounds,—are aware how much of science and how much of other outward circumstances is added to the instinct of the dog in the ordinary hunting of the present day. No doubt the best of it, those moments of ecstatic delight in which the man on his horse is able to forget all the cares of the world, and to believe that no paradise can add anything to the joy of that half hour, those well-remembered gems in life, so few and far between, have all been owing to a hot scent carried breast-high by fleet hounds. In those moments no fictitious aid is required, and the huntsman

himself may be absent and for a while not missed;—but before we have reached that acme of bliss much has been done to help the track; the fox has been stopped out of his home by human intellect, his whereabouts has been discovered probably by human knowledge; he has been watched out of the covert by human eyes; his track, in default of the hounds, has been detected by human ingenuity; and a hundred voices have been raised to assist the pack when at fault. And on ordinary days,—on days in which those creamy moments of ecstasies are only hoped for, are hardly anticipated, and do not come,—it will often be the case that the huntsman will have much more to do with hunting the fox than have the hounds. Were it not so, the fox, understanding by his instinct the imperfection of the scent, would refuse to be driven away, would hang about his wood all day, probably dying there at last,—or would else turn and traverse, and twist about, running like a hare, and refusing to go far from his home. But the manner of his turning is within the compass of the professional skill of the instructed huntsman, and the fox owes a bitterer grudge to the guile of his human enemy than he does to the instinct of his canine foe. Before men had learned this skill, before money was forthcoming to make such skill profitable, when hunting was not a science as it is now, in those days of Squire Western of which we are speaking, the hounds had the hunting much more to themselves. We often hear sportsmen loud in their reprobation of the interference with which hounds are treated, reviling the men who holloa, and complaining of huntsmen for over-diligence in casting. “You should leave hounds alone and let them hunt,” men will say. If hounds were left alone and let to hunt, such men, trained as they now have been trained to hard riding, would not often find that which they have come out to seek. We are sometimes disposed to think that the time will arrive when hunting will be practised altogether without a fox,—without any game to run,—and that the sport will be managed with a bit of rag dipped every five minutes in asafoetida. The growing impatience of the age will hardly endure much longer the deficient scent or the slack running of the imperfect fox.

The big squire among the little squires, who became so naturally the Master of hounds in his neighbourhood, has gradually been converted to,—or is gradually giving way to,—the manager of a subscription pack. Between the one and the other there was a very grand and a very English phase of hunting, of which, indeed, some instances, though now but few, still remain. This is the phase on which the great lord undertook the enormous expense of hunting the county in a lordly style, for the amusement and recreation of all those who lived within reach of his magnificence, and defraying the whole expense of the establishment out of his own pocket. The Duke of Beaufort's hunt, and the Berkeley hunt, are still, we believe, maintained after this princely fashion. And there is something alluring in the idea of the

great seigneur of the county thus providing for the amusement, not only of his tenants and dependants, but also for that of the whole country-side. It is a remnant of that powerful splendour which enabled the old feudal lords to carry into battle their own followers, and to keep a troop of armed cavaliers, always ready for work, under their own roofs. But life is now so changed in all its ways, that this lordly magnificence is not in accordance with the tastes of the day. Men now prefer to hunt with subscription packs, in doing which they can pay their own proportion of the expenditure, and feel that they follow their amusement without other debt to the Master of their hunt than that which is always due to zeal and success in high position. It is very well that the Queen's hounds should be maintained without payment from those who follow them. They are paid for by the country, and the non-hunting population has not as yet deputed any Joseph Hume of the day to demur to the expenditure. But in regard to hunting generally, it is found that packs maintained by subscription are those which best meet the wishes of hunting men. We remember to have ridden with a noble earl, whose hounds always went into covert punctually at eleven if he were not coming, but never stirred from the meet till twelve if he were expected. We always felt while waiting through that hour that we were too dependent on the noble earl, and that he could hardly have enforced such a rule had he taken a subscription for maintaining the pack of hounds of which he was the Master.

Sportsmen like to feel that they are paying for their own amusement; but yet,—and we feel ourselves constrained to make this charge as a serious accusation against a large number of hunting men,—there is very much of niggardliness in this matter. Gentlemen are invited to undertake the management of fox-hounds with a subscription,—the understanding being that the man so invited shall give his time and experience, and that the necessary expenditure shall be defrayed by the hunt in general;—and yet it is too often the case that the amount subscribed is altogether inadequate for the purpose. There is a feeling that as the position of a Master of hounds is a place of honour, and much coveted, therefore the holder of it should be content to pay out of his own pocket a portion of the public expenditure. We have always felt that the argument was one which should never be allowed to have any weight. If gentlemen are content to hunt as dependants of a seignorial Master of hounds, in the manner which we have just described, let them find their grand seigneur, and accept the gift of his magnificence. There are men of wealth who will be willing to spend it in that fashion. But if there is to be the feeling in the hunting-field that the expense is borne by the gentlemen of the hunt generally, there should, we think, be no compromise in the matter. Let us, who hunt, be dependent or independent;—but let us not indulge our feeling of independence with a false boast, or comfort ourselves with an assurance that though we are contented to take our coats and waist-

coats from the generous hand of a rich neighbour, we pay for our boots and breeches ourselves.

It is somewhat difficult to state with accuracy the cost of maintaining a pack of fox-hounds, because circumstances differ greatly in different counties. The distances to be travelled with one pack are much greater than those which are to be encountered in another; the nature of the ground and of the fences require faster and stronger horses here than they do there; and circumstances varied in other respects enable horses, hounds, and men, to be in the field more frequently in one part of England, than they can in another. The following list, however, may be taken as giving, we believe, a by no means extravagant statement of the ordinary annual expenditure of a Master of hounds, in reference to his stable and kennel. We presume that the pack is hunted four days a week, and that second horses are supplied for the huntsman always, and as occasion may require for the first whip. It will, of course, be understood that the expense of the Master's own stud and private servants are not here included, and that the items named are simply such as would be necessary if the pack were hunted by a committee of gentlemen managing a fund raised by subscription.

Wages of one huntsman and of two whips	£250
Ditto of feeder	55
Ditto of grooms, second horsemen, stable assistants, &c.	300
Servants' clothing	180
Cost of horses:—eighteen horses purchased at £60 each, kept at work for three years, and sold for £15 each. £15	
each horse per annum	270
Feeding for eighteen horses	455
Saddler's bill	150
Blacksmith	60
Veterinary expenses (including medicine)	45
Horseflesh and meal for hounds (fifty-five couple)	510
Rent of stables and kennels, including rates and interest of money spent in building and fitting	80
Assessed taxes on servants, horses, and hounds	65
Coals and candles	50
Travelling expenses	80
Incidental expenses	150
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	£2700

We are aware that if this statement should meet the eyes of any Master of hounds, or of gentlemen cognizant with the management of stables and kennels, exception may be taken to many of the details. Many Masters give higher prices for their horses; some will say that they do not realise such sum as that named for those that are cast; others will feel sure that their horses last them more than the three years specified; but we think that, taking one county with another, the average would be found to be nearly correct. Wages again, and all inci-

dental expenses, will vary very much. Travelling expenses will, in some hunting counties, be much higher than we have put them. In others, the feeding of hounds will be less, because it will be generally unnecessary to buy horse flesh. But we feel assured that we have not given an extravagant statement;—that a Master of hounds who goes out four days a week, and does so with that attendance of servants which the nature of the sport now demands, will not be able to place the sum-total of his expenses at a lower figure than that we have named. And yet it must be acknowledged that in many counties in which four days are expected from the Master, it is found quite impossible to raise such a sum by subscription as that above stated.

There are, of course, very many items in the expenditure of hunting a county which it is impossible to insert in such a list, because those in one county will bear no proportion at all to those in another;—and also because in some counties they fall almost exclusively on the Master, in others they do so to a great degree, in others to a less degree, and again in others perhaps not at all. Nothing has been set down for gamekeepers, nothing for earth-stopping, nothing for rent and planting and protection of coverts, and nothing for that terrible matter of poultry. Fees for gamekeepers are almost always paid by the Master. The stopping of earth, which is a matter much more important in some counties than in others, may, to a great degree, be left to the gentry and farmers when the gentry and farmers are zealous and know what they are about. It is not generally expected that a Master should pay rent for coverts, but for his own credit's sake he will often do so. He will hire shooting here and there,—not wanting the shooting, but knowing that with a minimum of shooting there will be a maximum of foxes. He ought to have nothing to do with compensation for poultry;—but old women with the sad remains of ducks' heads and turkeys' throats will naturally go to him, and he will often find himself compelled to satisfy them. We have presumed that his hounds came to him from heaven, and we have charged nothing for their cost. It is the Master's practice, no doubt, to breed them;—but some must have been bought originally. In addition to all this, he will want a private secretary, and in the matter of postage is a staunch supporter of the Queen's revenue. It has been truly said of a Master of hounds that he must always have his hand in his pocket, and always have a guinea in it.

It may be as well that we should here state also what is the ordinary personal cost of hunting to the sportsman, and we shall then see at a glance how small a proportion of that expenditure is the subscription required from him for maintaining the pack, even if he be willing to pay his fair share of the cost. And here again we must observe that the cost of a hunting establishment must vary greatly according to the circumstances in life of its owner. The country gentleman, who lives in the middle of a hunt, has few or

no travelling expenses, has his own paddocks for his horses, pays no appreciable rent for his stables, has servants in his yard at low wages, and can, from his position in the county, generally carry on the work with a lesser stud than will suit the sportsman from a distance. In the following statement we have endeavoured to give the ordinary expenditure of a man who has to supply himself with all that he requires for hunting after having taken up his residence in some hunting country. It will often be the case, perhaps more often than not, that such a man will not burden himself with a stable, but will pay so much per horse to some keeper of stables. He will find much comfort in doing so, but we do not think that in point of expense there will be much difference. Hunting is a pursuit in which the close-fisted man will carry on the war at a very much cheaper rate than he who is thoughtless in such matters. There is money to be lavished and money to be saved on every item,—from the cost of your horse to the charge for removing a shoe. But this spirit of economy, or of extravagance, will prevail with the same effect whether you keep stables of your own, or have your dealings with a stable-keeper. If you will consent to ride hired horses on all occasions, you may no doubt go over the ground at a cheaper rate than you can with your own cattle. But you must be indifferent to the feeling of ownership, which is one of the great delights of hunting; you must be prepared to ride a roarer, which is the purgatory of hunting; the horses given to you will generally gallop and jump, but they will always be stale;—and you must be superbly indifferent to the safety of your own neck. Submitting to these drawbacks you can, we believe, ride hired horses at least 25 per cent. cheaper than you can keep them for yourself. And the man who does this will have the advantage of hunting, and of quitting the expense of hunting, just when it suits him to do either the one or the other.

We have presumed, in preparing the following details, that the owner of the stud desires to hunt four days a week, and that he requires two horses out on each day. Not a large proportion of men who hunt wants by any means so extensive an establishment. Stables of four and three horses are, we believe, much more common than stables of seven. Comparatively few men do hunt four days a week, and of those who do, many are young enough and light enough to go through the day upon one horse. But we have found it easier to take the account of a full stable, and will simply say that the items may be divided so as to show the ordinary expenditure necessary for one, three, four, or any other number of horses. The result will be about this;—that he who rides with one horse will pay £5 a-day for his sport, and that he who rides with two horses will pay £10. I have presumed that seven horses are necessary,—in order that eight may leave the stable every week. A lesser number will not suffice. Out of seven there will generally be at least one that requires tem-

porary retirement, and six ready for the field are needed for such work.

Servants' wages (three)	£130
Servants' clothing	50
Hunting clothes for self	15
Cost of horses :—seven in use purchased at £120 each, sold at £45, and kept at work for three years each—annual cost of £25*.	175
Feeding seven horses, £30 per horse *	210
Saddler's bill	30
Blacksmith's ditto	20
Veterinary expenses (including medicine)	25
Rent of stables	25
Taxes	10
Travelling expenses	100
Incidental expenses,—coals, gas, candles, brooms, brushes, buckets, &c., &c.	50
	<hr/>
	£840

This expenditure will thus give a man four days' hunting a week for twenty-one weeks in the year, at £10 a day. When any sportsman shall find that he has achieved this, and has ridden his eighty-four days between the beginning of November and the middle of April, we will congratulate him on the state of his own health, on that of his stud, on the ease with which he manages the ordinary business of his life,—and especially in regard to the weather.

It will be observed by those who themselves defray the expense of a hunting establishment that nothing has been here put down as the cost of subscribing to the pack;—and yet it is admitted by nearly all that some such subscription must be paid. The amount, however, is not unfrequently so small as to add but a very slight percentage to the other expenses of the amusement. Men almost think that in hunting they should have for nothing the servants, the horses, the hounds, and the game,—as they do have for nothing the woods which they see drawn and the land over which they ride. If we may be allowed to make a suggestion in a matter so extremely delicate, we would say that hunting men should ordinarily fix their subscriptions at about 10s. for each horse they have out during the season. The man who hunts once a week with one horse would thus pay his £10 or £15,—which should be held to be sufficient;—whereas the sportsman who is enabled by his leisure and his pocket to hunt four days a week, with two horses for each day, should not subscribe less than £70 or £80 per annum.

It will be thought by some who have seen the large crowds of horsemen at many of our meets, but who have not analysed those

* It will be observed that the feed of horses is placed at a lower figure in regard to the Master's stables than it is here fixed. The Master will have advantages,—especially as to summering horses,—which a private sportsman cannot generally obtain; and will in most cases have his own hay, vetches, &c.

crowds, that if the above advice of ours were taken, much more money would be subscribed than is needed to make up the sum named as the proper amount of a Master's expenses; but when the crowd has been analysed, such will not be found to be the case. Farmers should never be allowed to pay. They give their land, and preserve the foxes, and have to sustain loss to their crops and poultry without a complaint,—as best they may. Clergymen rarely pay. It would not be fitting that bishops should know that their names are on the lists,—and then they act as chaplains to the hunt. Doctors do not pay, setting our bones for us when they are broken,—sometimes gratuitously. The small tradesmen never pay anything. The ruck of horsekeepers, innkeepers, and of horsey men generally who ride in black coats, hunting caps, and old brown breeches, and which is to be seen with every hunt, which comes from heaven knows where, and lives heaven knows how, never pays anything. When you are buried beneath your horse in a ditch, two or three of such will generally be there to take you out,—and will understand well how to do it. Ladies pay nothing for amusing themselves,—either when hunting or elsewhere,—and we hope it may be long before any one will wish that they should do so. Boys who come home at Christmas to their ponies and mince-pies pay nothing. Old gentlemen who toddle out on their cobs if the weather be fine to see what is going on, do not often add to the fund; and then strangers to the hunt of course do not pay. It must be a small field that will give a larger percentage of paying men than one in four.

The upshot of all that we have said tends to show that hunting is a costly amusement. There can be but a few men, we may suppose, who can afford, and will be willing to pay £800 or £900 a year for a single diversion. But it must be remembered that men may hunt,—as we have said before,—without hunting four days a week, and may hunt also without the luxury of a second horse. We have heard men say that they would rather not hunt at all than go out no oftener than twice a week,—and that to hunt as the owner of a single horse is simple misery, and the name of hunting only. We altogether disagree with these statements, and think them to be bombastic and pretentious. If we could venture to offer advice on such a matter to young beginners, we should counsel them rather to confine themselves to two days a week, believing that hunting, like any other amusement, will pall by great frequency. We will not here take advantage of our situation and preach a sermon to show that no man with a purport in his life should devote more than two days in a week to any amusement; but we will confine ourselves simply to the fact that the man who hunts twice a week,—or more thoroughly still, he who hunts but once a week,—is the sportsman who is ever the keenest. It is he who feels that the day is never long enough, and that the Master is a recreant to think of returning to the kennel

before black night has thoroughly established herself. It is he who is satisfied with the run when he gets it, thinking it to be all delightful, not criticising the pace too minutely, not quarrelling with the nature of the ground, not caring much whether the fox has gone straight or has turned, putting up with little when but little is to be had, and being a glutton for much when much comes in his way. Nothing strikes us more in the hunting-field than the fastidious indolence of men who are every day in the saddle. They will hardly take the trouble to be on the look out for sport unless they be at some pet covert, or riding a favourite horse. If the wind blow, or the sun shine, if the land clog a little or be too dry, if it be the dog pack instead of the bitches, or the bitch pack instead of the dogs, if the wood be large, or foxes reported to be scarce, or if, by any not uncommon chance, these gentlemen shall have got out of bed on the wrong side in the morning, all hope of hunting is over for that day. A man who has only one day in the week to give to his amusement is more chary with his hopes before he relinquishes them.

And as for the man with the one horse——! But here, gentle reader, if you will permit the solicism, we will leave for a few minutes the authoritative grandiosity of the plural number, and approach you with a closer personification. He who now writes these words, possibly for our advantage, ostensibly for your delectation, was a man with one horse for some eight years of his hunting life, and he flatters himself that he saw what hunting was. He knows, at any rate, that he enjoyed hunting then as he has not enjoyed it since, and may never hope to do again. And he feels, also, that when he sees a young man with only one day at his command, and only one horse belonging to him,—and with the proper sort of spirit within that young man's hunting gear,—he envies that young man as he never has envied any other human being on the earth.

We will now return to the plural number, and to propriety of expression. We have stated above what will be the average expenditure of a large stable. The man who wishes to begin with one horse, may divide the sum we have named by seven, and will find that he will have the amount for which he ought to carry on his amusement. He will, of course, keep his horse at a livery stable, and it will cost him about £120 per annum, including the fees to the groom, some little expenses for travelling, and the price of his boots and breeches. There will also come out of that sum, if he is careful, the necessary percentage on the original cost of his horse. For that expenditure he may have from twenty to twenty-four days' hunting in the year. If I say that he may, without additional cost, ensure good health and good society, learn good manners, and see Englishmen at their best, we of the SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE may perhaps be thought to entertain exaggerated ideas of the benefit of hunting.

GLASS HOUSES.

Not having any great relish for green peas or fresh strawberries in December, and preferring at all times the humblest daisy to the most flaunting exotic, we do not purpose writing a scientific essay on the construction of those edifices wherein men rear their unseasonable delicacies, and generally at an expense out of all proportion to the result. Our intention is to treat solely of the baseless and visionary fabrics beneath which men endeavour to conceal those pet vices and frailties which, though so pleasant,—and often profitable,—to the owners, would lose much of their charm if exposed to the vulgar eye. Alas ! they little dream of the fragile nature of the materials they have used in constructing the airy dwelling, or of its insecurity, until on a sudden a small stone crashes through the roof, and the hidden imposture is revealed amidst the contemptuous sneers and the unrestrained delight of the bystanders, who ever sympathise rather with the injurers than with the injured.

The love of sport,—seasoned with destruction to show the presence of power,—is inherent in the human mind, and the pleasures of mischief have a fascination which few can at all times withstand. As boys, undeterred by the presence of a policeman round the corner, will throw stones at the obtrusive and convenient hot-house, so men will chuck their equally destructive pellets of the brain at whatever for the moment arouses their pugnacity, without entertaining the slightest fear of interference on the part of the critics. For even as the legal guardian over material property, on the plea of protecting the master's house, will be guilty of petty felony at the faltering voice of the beloved cook ; so the moral policeman, on the plea of protecting the public from the attacks of authors, will be often guilty of the most fearful scurrility, and though his duty is to promote social order, will sometimes contrive to mar matters rather than to mend them.

Though, from the weakness of human nature, we are all of us apt to covet the goods and chattels of our wealthier brethren, yet our envy does not extend to the desire of sharing in their moral qualities ; and, from the prince to the peasant, we are prone individually to say, “Lord, I thank thee that thou hast not made me like other men ;” and then we go over the catalogue of the follies and frailties of our neighbours, and wantonly cause sad havoc to their moral glass houses, foolishly believing that our own little structure is either too modest and unpretentious to attract notice, or else that it is so carefully constructed

as to be proof against any attack from without. "Ah! you poor self-deluded man," as our unctuous friend the Reverend Ebenezer Slap-bang, that mighty pillar of the tabernacle, would say; "the gentleman in black laughs at your ingenuity, and in spite of your stone and iron and cement will find his way into your dwelling; and, even so, there shall be a faulty spot in your moral edifice through which the stone of the assailant shall crash, and leave you weeping amidst the shattered ruins."

National glass houses have the first claim on the philosopher's attention on account of the numerical strength both of the assailants and the defenders; but, as is usually the result of employing too many hands in the construction, those edifices are less impregnable than those reared by, or under the supervision of, a single mind. The British glass house is a large and important structure, with a solidity of masonry by no means proportionate to the lightness of the roof, the materials of which are of as perishable a nature as is the miserable stucco of our actual dwelling-houses. But, in a political point of view, there is a great resemblance between the national glass houses of every country. Like the shops "opened to supply the public with pure Alton ale," they have been erected ostensibly for supplying the world with those blessings peculiarly in the power of each respective nation to bestow. But whether it be "free trade" promoted by the ships of England; "liberty, equality, and fraternity," proclaimed by the eagles of France; or "German unity," established by the needle-guns of Prussia, the real motive has ever been selfish greed; and when the harbingers of "peace and goodwill," whether "commercial delegate," "proconsul," or military "Meinherr," have obtained a momentary success in the spread of their doctrines, it has always been accompanied by a draft at sight on the fortunate recipients of a nation's favour. "But if I am to pay so much for the blessing, I don't want it," says the poor victim. "No matter," replies the benevolent promoter of public welfare, "you must pay all the same, and you will receive hereafter the full benefit of the gift we offer you."

Hereafter, indeed! Oh, yes! at such time when another glorious benefactor shall arrive with a bran new gift under his arm, and shall say to the eye-staring and mouth-gaping populace, "Behold, I come to scatter peace and plenty on your benighted land, and to free you from the despotism which has hitherto crippled your energies,"—and after the loud shouting and mad tossing of greasy caps in the air are over, and ere the smouldering ashes of the glorifying bonfires are cold, he, too, shall present his little bill, and, doubtless, it shall also be duly paid! Alas! in each country are there not millions who have greater need of the gift it so ostentatiously offers to others, and would it not be as well to begin the philanthropic crusade at home? Oh! smash those national glass houses, for they are huge impostures, which too often only conceal tyranny!

If, on the other hand, we regard these glass houses from a social point of view, the result is equally unsatisfactory. Break but a pane of the British glass house, and you may see License tearing through the mask of Liberty, and Poverty peeping under the cloak of Wealth. Do the same to the French edifice, and you may behold Insolence grinning behind the thin veil of Politeness, and Egotism blustering in Cosmopolitan attire. Perform the operation on the German building, and you may see Lethargy, heavy with the fumes of beer and tobacco, dozing on the couch of Philosophy. Lastly, knock at the American structure, and you will find Intolerance ranting in the pulpit of Toleration, and Slavery crouching beneath the feet of Independence. Moreover, through the glittering vanity of the exterior you may equally behold all the nakedness of the inner dwelling. "Oh! smash those national glass houses," again we cry, for they conceal not only the petty vices, but also the real virtues, of a people.

We do not purpose to treat at any length of the political glass houses. The subject no doubt is an inviting one, but in our reckless progress might we not unintentionally tread upon the toes of our worthy Editor? Still we must have just one cast, with a little stone, at the glittering edifices, which, however, are made so entirely of glass that one needs scarcely to break a single pane to get a peep at the by no means imposing contents. Shall we not find one pet idol shrined in all of them, whose features, though more or less begrimed with paint, are the same in form? The Tory, the Whig, and the Radical buildings, however differing in colour, are all created for the same purpose, namely, to preserve the Constitution. It is only on breaking the panes we can discover that the vice they respectively conceal is one differing in degree rather than in distinctive character. The conservatism of the Tory is a desire to keep what he has got, and to let no one else share in his privileges; the conservatism of the Whig is to retain his possessions, but to assist others in acquiring property,—provided it be taken from the Tories; and the conservatism of the Radical is not only to keep what he has got, but also to confiscate the entire property of both the antagonists; and possibly the day may come when the Radical, like the lawyer in the fable, having swallowed the constitutional oyster, shall bestow a shell each upon the Tory and the Whig.

The British commercial glass house is a most imposing building from its dimensions, but it has spread out by piecemeal in all directions, so that it wants the solidity of a single structure; whilst the amount of glass it contains arouses continual fear and anxiety. Gaily the flags wave from its thousand pinnacles, and millions of tongues proclaim aloud the blessings of commercial enterprise. But when the child has scraped the gilt off the crown she finds that her king is, after all, only common gingerbread, not a whit better in

quality than the material of the edible peasant. So, lifting the heavy jewelled veil of commercial enterprise, we see beneath nothing but common greed, to satisfy which it matters little whether the means be a bale of clothing or a barrel of raw spirits. When, moreover, we look at far-distant lands, once swarming with " ignorant and cruel savages," we see a few miserable disease-stricken wretches, who are the sole remnants of a mighty race, whilst hecatombs upon hecatombs of human beings attest to the blessings which attend the "progress of civilisation." Alas! commerce had need to have scattered some good to mitigate the evils it has spread; and as to the boasted morality of the British merchant, we would rather be silent on that subject. If you need an answer, go and seek it from the lips of those dupes whose ruin has been caused by a blind belief in that very morality.

We do not purpose at present to make a hole in the glass houses of active philanthropy, whether promulgated in social congresses or other public meetings where men air their peculiar crotchetts, with but little tangible result. Nor shall we venture to lay impious hands on the huge legal edifice which seems to have been erected to conceal a contempt for justice, or to fence it round with such thorny palisades that its divine presence can only be reached after much moral laceration and material loss of wealth. But the structure, however labyrinthine, is not proof against the attacks of common-sense, would men only condescend to use it; but they prefer the intricate way, and well deserve to suffer the penalty of their blindness and folly.

The architect of the national glass house is Pride; of the individual one, Hypocrisy is the builder; and of all the edifices of the latter order that of religion is the most important and the most common. It is also the most impregnable, because the reverence generally aroused even by the outward appearance of religion is sufficient to prevent us from attacking any one who wears a decent mask, and not until the rent garments no longer conceal the deformity beneath will the respected cloak be indignantly torn off. But when a pane of the seemingly sacred edifice is shattered, what horrible details are revealed! For therein are not only exposed the vices most directly opposed to the spirit of Christianity, but, as the humiliating pages of the Newgate Calendar too well reveal, you may feel the presence of the foulest crimes which human nature can be guilty of committing. And when the criminals are exposed, what groans of disgust, and it may be of fear, are uttered by those who have possessed themselves of snug edifices of a like nature! But we will not dwell on the theme, for the more we proceed in our inquiry, the more chance is there that our faith in the national morality may be rudely shaken.

Another glass house equally meriting destruction is that which the "charitable" man raises to hide from the world his meanness and

selfishness. He is generally a pertinacious hunter after titled society, and if "my lady" asks his assistance for a "bed and blanket" society, of which she is the patroness, with many a smile and much expression of gratitude "for the opportunity afforded him of assisting in the promotion of such a benevolent object," he will tender his guinea. But mark his demeanour to his wife when he reaches home, and you will see that he is not very grateful "for the opportunity;" and most assuredly that guinea will be eventually repaid out of his daughter's miserable pittance. It is true that the hypocrite will preach to her on the blessings which must rest on those who spend their money in charity rather than on dress; but can she believe him, and what must a daughter think of such a father?

Some people, in erecting their glass houses, think less of the thickness of the panes than of the putty which cements them; but the oleaginous matter is scarcely proof against the first expression of contempt. Of such, the scandal-monger,—the destroyer of the reputation of others,—is by far the most hateful. He needs no assistance to spread the infamous lie, for he will invent it himself and be his own purveyor, for he dreads detection if he assists another in a similar operation. His method of proceeding is after this fashion. He will go to a friend of the person he seeks to injure, and exclaiming against "those wretches who diffuse evil reports," he will say, "By-the-bye, how sorry I was to hear that 'So-and-So' has been guilty—of this, or of that;" and when asked for his authority, he will say that the intelligence was imparted to him "under a promise of the strictest secrecy, and that his sole motive in making known the painful fact was that it might be investigated by the best friend of the poor fellow." The device succeeds, and is often attended with fatal consequences. If ever any one comes to you saying, "I have been told by a person whose name I cannot mention," depend upon it you have caught one of the species we refer to, and we beg you not to be contented by morally smashing a single pane, but to shiver the entire glass house, and bury the contemptible owner of it in the ruins.

With respect to those who, in common parlance, are said to "try and make themselves out to be worse than they are," we regard their glass houses with suspicion, and even with aversion. Notwithstanding their simple and whitewashed appearance, we have no faith in the virtues of the inmates, but rather believe that, as a man will sacrifice a sprat to catch a herring, so those extremely honest people will confess to trifling errors which they do not possess in order to conceal the big vices of which they are really guilty. One man will acknowledge that he is a bit of a glutton, which he is not, merely to conceal that he is an habitual drunkard, which he is; another will own to the folly of imprudence, which he has not, in order to cloak the vice of avarice, which he has; a third will confess that he is wholly sceptical of human virtue, which he is not, merely to conceal the envy, hatred,

and uncharitableness which he really possesses ; a fourth ;—but why proceed ? We might continue the parallel through the whole catalogue of errors and vices, and so we content ourselves by saying, Never place any reliance on those who “try to make themselves out to be worse than they are,” and smash their impudent glass houses whenever you have an opportunity to do so.

Nor less open to suspicion is the glass house in which dwells the “honest man who always says what he means.” The edifice is always uncouth and unsightly, and we fancy that we can trace the presence of envy through the rugged panes ; for, as to mere prejudice, we make no account of it in our moral survey. But even if we believe in this man’s sincerity, we must pity the taste which makes a man insensible to the pain he inflicts on others. Depend upon it, there is more vanity in such honesty than there is a love of simple truth.

As to the little glass house of stoicism which the gentle cynic raises in order to conceal his real tenderness and benevolence, God forbid that we should hurl the smallest stone at the venial imposture. Nay, there is no necessity for either violence or fraud, for at the faintest cry of real distress the inmate will peep out, and when detected,—like an absent man, who has come into the open air without his hat,—he will put his hand to his bald pate, and mumble some feeble excuse about the genial weather. It is of no use, sir, for you to tell us that people who encourage street-performers ought to be severely punished, and that the latter ought to be whipped and sent to prison. Did we not detect a moisture in your eye, and such a frequent use of the pocket-handkerchief as implied a fearful nasal obstruction, when you sat the other day in a foreign market-place looking at a poor tumbler going wearily through his million-and-tenth performance ? Think of that, ye stage-managers who boast of “Pretty Se-usan, don’t say no,” being thrice encored for two hundred and sixty nights, —more shame to the audience, we say. And when the poor juggler’s wan-faced little girl in faded tinsel came up, trembling at your ferocious appearance, did you not slyly slip a five-franc piece into her tiny hand, and gently clench her bits of fingers over the coin to hide it from the vulgar gaze, and then quickly slink away as if you were ashamed of the deed ? Nor was it the amount of your gift,—had it been ten times greater,—that made us marvel ; but that you should be detected in committing an offence for which, according to your own words, you ought to be “severely punished.” But go on ; we would not punish you, —no, not even though we know well that you derived fifty times more pleasure from that clumsy performance than you ever felt in witnessing the marvellous feats of the accomplished Houdin.

As to the simple-minded man who believes that his sagacity is more than a match for cunning or fraud, and who boasts that no one “can do him,” we will pass by his dwelling without hurling a stone at the

fragile exterior ; for he does no harm to any one but himself, and is sure to be found outside the building at the sound of the approaching steps of any smooth-tongued rascal.

In spite of the antique and solemn appearance of the philosopher's edifice, we must not so far neglect our duty as to leave it unscathed. Bang ;—there goes a pane. Now approach boldly, and have no fear of disturbing deep reveries which shall tend to the solution of mighty questions that affect the future welfare of the human race. Look in ; you will most probably find the venerable sage stretched on a sofa, with a cigar in his mouth, and a volume of Paul de Kock in his hands ; nor does his face betray the pain of intense thought, for it is only when he sallies abroad that he dons the well-known black-velvet tunic and skull-cap, with a worm-eaten folio under his arm, and his head bent to earth in solemn reverie. But there is, too, a kind of philosophy in his secret pursuit, which is, in some poor way, profitable to himself ; and has he not the first right to benefit by the application of those philosophical principles which have taken him so many years to elucidate ? The great vice, however, which the revered sage conceals under his heavy cloak of wisdom is a narrow contempt for what he terms "the grovelling propensities of mankind." "A bas la philosophie," O star-gazer, if wisdom is to make us insensible to the pleasures which have always pleased. Don't talk of gall and ashes because the untutored intellect revels in the present sunshine. Evil may follow, truly, but sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Why tell us that possibly to-morrow we may grieve over the pleasures of to-day ? Were we to follow your sage advice, though we might escape pain, yet we should pass away from earth, possibly, without having partaken of a single blessing pertaining to our mortal lot. We may be fools for laughing at old Punch and his stale pugnacity, but why condemn us because the grimness of thy mouth is thereby made more grim ? The fault is in thy superior wisdom, and not in our inferior intelligence.

The professional glass house,—literary, artistic, or musical,—however aerial in outward appearance, is so interlaced within by technicalities, that its weakness by no means corresponds to its apparent insolidity. But though filmy, and almost imperceptible, by means of its hired covering, the panes are so thin that they yield to the slightest pressure ; and, looking through the "technicalities," we can detect the big words,—the well-known spots of white or patches of red, and the oft-repeated "suspensions," which conceal the real poverty of invention. We know the big word, the white spot, and the red patch by sight, but their no-meaning who can fathom ? We feel that the soft squeak of the oboe, and the growling of the double-bass, announce respectively the approach of the innocent heroine or of the guilty villain of the piece ; but the trick is stale, and we are no longer excited by that "piling up of the agony" to sink into lowest bathos.

If people would only employ the smallest amount of the perception given to them exclusively, they might understand it; but they will not do so, and therefore are touched alone by that which excites a momentary shock,—whether it be a big word, a white spot, a patch of red, or a sudden crash of the bass trombone. So we wonder not that the inmates of the professional glass houses chuckle in seeming security. Oh, good friend!—poet, painter, or musician,—we will honour you for showing us what gifts you really possess, but we must despise your clap-trap. If you merely seek to win the attention of the ignorant, you may obtain success by employing a farthing rush-light; but if you want your real worth to be revealed, pray give us the light of a lamp, or, in its absence, of a wax-candle at least.

Erasmus Bawler is seemingly a learned man whose information is unbounded. He is equally at home on politics, religion, science, or art; and his knowledge of classical history is so great, that he could not write even on “ducks and green peas” without countless allusions to Greek or Latin worthies. You marvel where and how he has picked up his vast erudition. Break a pane of his glass house, and you will see by his side twenty quarto volumes, to which ever and anon he refers. Oh, Erasmus Bawler! leave your encyclopædia for a few moments, and come out into the open air. The observation of Human Nature will give you wealth far more sterling than the base metal you have hitherto passed, however successfully.

Facile Flourish is a most popular painter, and we will enter his studio and watch the consummate genius at work. We see him with a jaunty air putting on the flicks of paint,—we perceive none in Nature's work,—anon producing the “firm outline,”—there are no such outlines in Nature,—or the grimaces of expression, which are not Nature's making; and we go away from the inspection of his work with an idea that all this cleverness only conceals the want of real genius. Oh, Facile Flourish! give us a little more head-work and a little less hand-work, though we know that the market price of the latter is at least one hundred guineas per square foot.

Signora Squilisi has a fine voice, which, properly employed, would “lap the soul in Elysium;” but she prefers the shower of bouquets and the clapping of hands to any gratitude of the heart. She is a great favourite, and her admirers think she has endless treasures in her florid glass house, the panes of which are her grimaces, personal and vocal. Remove these, and within is emptiness. Or listen to Herr Bangbang at the piano; and, watching the lightning rapidity of his facile fingers, you marvel at his wonderful execution. Bah! Wonderful execution, indeed! Don't you know of a certain animal which kicks up a dust in order to conceal its presence from the enemy? Well, Herr Bangbang's execution is only dust,—vile dust,—that sticks in the ears; though, truly, the latter lose nothing by the concealment of the Herr's genius. Oh, professor! if you will play us a few of

Mendelssohn's Lieder, we will tell you what we think of your executive power. We know that they are "ohne worte," and wish we could say that your performance was equally without "palaver."

Oh, ye stern and unbending critics! self-accredited ambassadors to the empire of taste! Ye unflinching champions of truth and implacable enemies of falsehood! Fain would we stealthily pass your glass houses with shoeless feet; for we know well that you are ever on the watch with bludgeon or blunderbuss to chastise the insolent intruders into your sacred precincts. But in truth your edifices are so imposing,—the outsides are so rich in painting, gilding, and sculptured ornaments,—that our curiosity to behold the vast treasures that must be concealed within overcomes our natural fear and reverence. Bang—bang—bang—bang—bang! Lord help us and deliver us! There are six panes broken at least! Well, there is but little use in running away now that the mischief is done, so let us go and take a hasty look within, trusting that the sight of the many beauties we may possibly see will compensate us for the kicks which we shall certainly receive. Why, "good gracious!" as our dear old chum at the club would say, what do we see in the almost deserted mansions? Where are the lovely tapestries, the rich carpets, the luxurious sofas, and other articles of taste to correspond with the gorgeous magnificence of the outside? Above all, where is the odour of wisdom and peace? In the first building we see a critic sitting at a table amidst piles of books and papers: one foot is through a picture; by heavens! a Landseer too; and the other, very muddy, is on the pages of a new publication, whilst he tears his hair and scrunches the pen between his teeth. In the second we see a man blowing out long bladders, such as the disguised Leporello uses on the stage to pummel therewith the simple Masetto. In the third we perceive heaps of sawdust, which the industrious owner is stufling into bags all labelled as knowledge. A fourth, in a corner of his now violated house, is making from gallstones and sulphur an explosive powder which he trusts may be equally efficacious in blowing into fragments poet, painter, or player; while a fifth is compounding a thick paste with treacle, jam, and honey. Lastly, in the sixth, I see a man in a profuse perspiration, casting cannon-balls and offensive rockets by the million. Surely these must be magazines erected for the manufacture of weapons of destruction, and not temples or academies whence issues the voice of wisdom, accompanied by that sacred fire which removes the darkness of ignorance and illumines the path of truth. Alack! alack! let us try and slink through the crowds of envious authors, artists, musicians, singers, and actors, who with hungry and beseeching looks crowd round the palatial dwellings. Oh, critics! if you will only be more moderate in uttering your opinions, if you will divest your mind of prejudice, and, above all, endeavour to advance taste by dis-

covering beauty rather than by exposing deformity, the public and the public's intellectual purveyors will be deeply grateful. Sore in body, and afflicted in mind, we take our leave, fully resolved that nothing in future shall ever tempt us to break the glass houses of our professional brethren. For what can it matter to us that people should follow the shadow rather than the substance, or that wisdom, knowing the blindness of mankind, should disdain to put on a more substantial appearance ?

Towering above most other glass houses is the ostentatious but futile and fragile edifice raised by the wealthy man to conceal his parsimony, and out of which he peers continually, like a snail from its shell, at the slightest opportunity, to show his real nature. We have known a man possessed of hundreds of thousands, and who spared no money in the gratification of his desires, give a cabman sixpence for his drive, and answer Jehu's complaint by telling him it was—abundance. We have known another man who would haggle over the price of every article in the bill of a restaurateur, and yet pay without a murmur the heavy account of the picture-dealer, though we feel sure he derived more pleasure for the twenty-five francs than he ever will obtain for his twenty-five thousand pounds.

The edifice of the parvenu is, of all glass houses, the easiest to penetrate, and gives the least pleasure to its owner. Considering the miseries he undergoes in his assumed character, we wonder how long he can keep up the deception of smacking his lips over the glass of Château-Margaux, when he would prefer the homely gin, and takes it, too, with a "God's blessing," when he reaches his own dwelling. Were it not better, worthy Dives, to sell your carriages and horses, lest, like poor Secretary Craggs, you are caught some day involuntarily taking the place of your own footman ? All honour be yours who, by your ability and industry, have raised yourself to a high social position ; but, having attained it, do not ape the habits of those who are, as it were, to the manner born. There is room for you in your new station to display your individual virtues, and for the exercise of that power for good which your means enable you to perform so well. But the attempt to imitate the peculiar habits of any class to which you do not belong is mimicry, and, as mimicry, will meet only with ridicule.

You see a man who is always in a state of activity, and who seems miserable if for one moment he has nothing to do. You immediately pronounce him to be a pattern of industry, but you are wrong ; break his glass house, and you will see beneath this fluttering outside a mind so torpid, that neither the desire of fame or glory, nor even of wealth, can rouse it to action. We have no sympathy with those restless beings, nor are they ever happy ; for though it be true, as Shakspere says, that there is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ; yet, considering the shortness of life,

we are not sure whether the wisest course is not to lay-to at times in some quiet nook, and enjoy the present sunshine. When a rising current of wind be propitious, we can sally out if we are tired of our snug haven, and, though we run the risk of not reaching the goal, we have at least enjoyed some moments of happiness ; whereas the constant rover is ever looking for the haven of rest, and, though he passes a hundred choice spots on his course, he goes on ever hoping to find something better, and dies with his restless wishes unfulfilled.

As to those men who "have really so much work on hand that they have not a minute to spare," we confess that we are rather sceptical of their untiring industry. You need not break their glass houses, for the panes are so thin that you can easily see the interior. You may probably perceive a large canvas on an easel, or a library-table covered with sheets of manuscript ; and, if you peer further, you will see the inmate playing at pool or at whist with some fellow hard-workers. Heaven forbid that we should deprive him of his amusement, which, within proper limits, will keep the brain in order. We know that at times our friend does work hard, and well too ; but he acts on impulse, whilst your real hard-worker is more methodical, and though the latter does not at times pursue his occupation uninterruptedly for several days and nights, yet he ultimately turns out the greatest amount of work.

Glass houses are not regarded as very formidable defences by women, especially those reared by their own sex. The other day we were admiring a lady's dress in the presence of another lady, and we marvelled much at its beautiful colour. "You silly goose," said our fair friend, "can't you see that the silk has been dyed and turned ? It would serve men almost right if women ceased the attempt to dress well." We were silenced, but could not help thinking that possibly some men would have no objection at all to be "served quite right." Nothing can well exceed a woman's dexterity in smashing her neighbour's glass house, and the whole proceeding is a marvellous exhibition of ingenuity. Provided with the smallest pebble, but of the highest polish, she will approach her poor sister, and after much fond palaver and kissing of cheeks, she will retire to a short distance. Then, watching her opportunity, crash she sends the little missile with the force and whizz of a bullet. Awhile she watches the agony of her prostrate enemy, and then approaches with the sweetest of smiles to offer her pity and tears. Great God ! is it possible that such loveliness and tenderness can at times be allied to a cruelty in the refinement of which no wild animal can surpass the mortal angel ?

Of all the keen penetrators into individual glass houses, children are by far the most sagacious. You may attempt to deceive them by bonbons or toys, but they see through you at once, and though they take the presents, they will naïvely tell you that they "don't like

you." They can't say why, but they don't. We will tell you why. It is instinct. Children are said to be easily pleased, but, "en revanche," they are as easily disgusted; nor do we believe that their want of reason is fatal to the correctness of their decisions. Their likes and dislikes are as the instinct of a dog, which can immediately discover the friend of his species; and the child decides more truly by the heart than the man judges by the head;—all which goes far to prove that as we become, what we are pleased to call, more reasonable, we in truth become the greater dupes.

Let us not dwell on the paltry glass houses reared by Vanity merely to conceal the ravages of Time. Vain are patent hair-dyes, rouge, and henna, for they can no more deceive the spectators than they do the wearers, and only arouse contempt and indignation that men and women should feel ashamed of being no longer boys and girls. Can we wonder,—if age has so little respect for itself,—that it meets with still less reverence from others?

Here for the present we pause, for were we to employ all the precious hours of life in the destruction of glass houses, we should leave thousands still untouched. Moreover, have we not our own huge glass house, erected with much skill and patience, and at an enormous cost? Alas! it has been penetrated ever so often; and no sooner was one pane mended than another was broken, until, weary with the vain attempt of restoring the shattered edifice, we have come to the conclusion to stop up no more holes, but to let the curious and wicked wanderer look in, trusting to the labours of the spider to spin a web over the interstices, and so conceal the musty corners of the interior. Rather let us stay the coming wrath by acknowledging that our own building is as fragile and porous as any in existence.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER V.

MR. AND MRS. LOW.

THAT terrible apparition of the red Lord Chiltern had disturbed Phineas in the moment of his happiness as he sat listening to the kind flatteries of Lady Laura ; and though Lord Chiltern had vanished as quickly as he had appeared, there had come no return of his joy. Lady Laura had said some word about her brother, and Phineas had replied that he had never chanced to see Lord Chiltern. Then there had been an awkward silence, and almost immediately other persons had come in. After greeting one or two old acquaintances, among whom an elder sister of Laurence Fitzgibbon was one, he took his leave and escaped out into the square. "Miss Fitzgibbon is going to dine with us on Wednesday," said Lady Laura. "She says she won't answer for her brother, but she will bring him if she can."

"And you're a member of Parliament now too, they tell me," said Miss Fitzgibbon, holding up her hands. "I think everybody will be in Parliament before long. I wish I knew some man who wasn't, that I might think of changing my condition."

But Phineas cared very little what Miss Fitzgibbon said to him. Everybody knew Aspasia Fitzgibbon, and all who knew her were accustomed to put up with the violence of her jokes and the bitterness of her remarks. She was an old maid, over forty, very plain, who, having reconciled herself to the fact that she was an old maid, chose to take advantage of such poor privileges as the position gave her. Within the last few years a considerable fortune had fallen into her hands, some twenty-five thousand pounds, which had come to her unexpectedly,—a wonderful windfall. And now she was the only one of her family who had money at command. She lived in a small house by herself, in one of the smallest streets of May Fair, and walked about sturdily by herself, and spoke her mind about every thing. She was greatly devoted to her brother Laurence,—so devoted that there was nothing she would not do for him, short of lending him money.

But Phineas when he found himself out in the square thought nothing of Aspasia Fitzgibbon. He had gone to Lady Laura Standish for sympathy, and she had given it to him in full measure. She understood him and his aspirations if no one else did so on the face of the earth. She rejoiced in his triumph, and was not too hard to tell him

that she looked forward to his success. And in what delightful language she had done so! "Faint heart never won fair lady." It was thus, or almost thus, that she had encouraged him. He knew well that she had in truth meant nothing more than her words had seemed to signify. He did not for a moment attribute to her ought else. But might not he get another lesson from them? He had often told himself that he was not in love with Laura Standish;—but why should he not now tell himself that he was in love with her? Of course there would be difficulty. But was it not the business of his life to overcome difficulties? Had he not already overcome one difficulty almost as great; and why should he be afraid of this other? Faint heart never won fair lady! And this fair lady,—for at this moment he was ready to swear that she was very fair,—was already half won. She could not have taken him by the hand so warmly, and looked into his face so keenly, had she not felt for him something stronger than common friendship.

He had turned down Baker Street from the square, and was now walking towards the Regent's Park. He would go and see the beasts in the Zoological Gardens, and make up his mind as to his future mode of life in that delightful Sunday solitude. There was very much as to which it was necessary that he should make up his mind. If he resolved that he would ask Lady Laura Standish to be his wife, when should he ask her, and in what manner might he propose to her that they should live? It would hardly suit him to postpone his courtship indefinitely, knowing, as he did know, that he would be one among many suitors. He could not expect her to wait for him if he did not declare himself. And yet he could hardly ask her to come and share with him the allowance made to him by his father! Whether she had much fortune of her own, or little, or none at all, he did not in the least know. He did know that the Earl had been distressed by his son's extravagance, and that there had been some money difficulties arising from this source.

But his great desire would be to support his own wife by his own labour. At present he was hardly in a fair way to do that, unless he could get paid for his parliamentary work. Those fortunate gentlemen who form "The Government" are so paid. Yes;—there was the Treasury Bench open to him, and he must resolve that he would seat himself there. He would make Lady Laura understand this, and then he would ask his question. It was true that at present his political opponents had possession of the Treasury Bench;—but all governments are mortal, and Conservative governments in this country are especially prone to die. It was true that he could not hold even a Treasury lordship with a poor thousand a-year for his salary without having to face the electors of Loughshane again before he entered upon the enjoyment of his place;—but if he could only do something to give a grace to his name, to show that he was a rising man, the elec-

tors of Loughshane, who had once been so easy with him, would surely not be cruel to him when he showed himself a second time among them. Lord Tulla was his friend, and he had those points of law in his favour which possession bestows. And then he remembered that Lady Laura was related to almost everybody who was anybody among the high Whigs. She was, he knew, second cousin to Mr. Mildmay, who for years had been the leader of the Whigs, and was third cousin to Barrington Erle. The late President of the Council, the Duke of St. Bungay, and Lord Brentford had married sisters, and the St. Bungay people, and the Mildmay people, and the Brentford people had all some sort of connection with the Palliser people, of whom the heir and coming chief, Plantagenet Palliser, would certainly be Chancellor of the Exchequer in the next Government. Simply as an introduction into official life nothing could be more conducive to chances of success than a matrimonial alliance with Lady Laura. Not that he would have thought of such a thing on that account! No;—he thought of it because he loved her; honestly because he loved her. He swore to that half a dozen times, for his own satisfaction. But, loving her as he did, and resolving that in spite of all difficulties she should become his wife, there could be no reason why he should not,—on her account as well as on his own,—take advantage of any circumstances that there might be in his favour.

As he wandered among the unsavoury beasts, elbowed on every side by the Sunday visitors to the garden, he made up his mind that he would first let Lady Laura understand what were his intentions with regard to his future career, and that then he would ask her to join her lot to his. At every turn the chances would of course be very much against him;—ten to one against him, perhaps, on every point; but it was his lot in life to have to face such odds. Twelve months since it had been much more than ten to one against his getting into Parliament; and yet he was there. He expected to be blown into fragments,—to sheep-skinning in Australia, or packing preserved meats on the plains of Paraguay; but when the blowing into atoms should come, he was resolved that courage to bear the ruin should not be wanting. Then he quoted a line or two of a Latin poet, and felt himself to be comfortable.

“So, here you are again, Mr. Finn,” said a voice in his ear.

“Yes, Miss Fitzgibbon; here I am again.”

“I fancied you members of Parliament had something else to do besides looking at wild beasts. I thought you always spent Sunday in arranging how you might most effectually badger each other on Monday.”

“We got through all that early this morning, Miss Fitzgibbon, while you were saying your prayers.”

“Here is Mr. Kennedy too;—you know him I daresay. He also is a member; but then he can afford to be idle.” But it so happened

that Phineas did not know Mr. Kennedy, and consequently there was some slight form of introduction.

"I believe I am to meet you at dinner on Wednesday,"—said Phineas,—“at Lord Brentford's.”

“And me too,” said Miss Fitzgibbon.

“Which will be the greatest possible addition to our pleasure,” said Phineas.

Mr. Kennedy, who seemed to be afflicted with some difficulty in speaking, and whose bow to our hero had hardly done more than produce the slightest possible motion to the top of his hat, hereupon muttered something which was taken to mean an assent to the proposition as to Wednesday's dinner. Then he stood perfectly still, with his two hands fixed on the top of his umbrella, and gazed at the great monkeys' cage. But it was clear that he was not looking at any special monkey, for his eyes never wandered.

“Did you ever see such a contrast in your life,” said Miss Fitzgibbon to Phineas,—hardly in a whisper.

“Between what?” said Phineas.

“Between Mr. Kennedy and a monkey. The monkey has so much to say for himself, and is so delightfully wicked! I don't suppose that Mr. Kennedy ever did anything wrong in his life.”

Mr. Kennedy was a man who had very little temptation to do anything wrong. He was possessed of over a million and a half of money, which he was mistaken enough to suppose he had made himself; whereas it may be doubted whether he had ever earned a penny. His father and his uncle had created a business in Glasgow, and that business now belonged to him. But his father and his uncle, who had toiled through their long lives, had left behind them servants who understood the work, and the business now went on prospering almost by its own momentum. The Mr. Kennedy of the present day, the sole owner of the business, though he did occasionally go to Glasgow, certainly did nothing towards maintaining it. He had a magnificent place in Perthshire, called Loughlinter, and he sat for a Scotch group of boroughs, and he had a house in London, and a stud of horses in Leicestershire, which he rarely visited, and was unmarried. He never spoke much to any one, although he was constantly in society. He rarely did anything, although he had the means of doing everything. He had very seldom been on his legs in the House of Commons, though he had sat there for ten years. He was seen about everywhere, sometimes with one acquaintance and sometimes with another; —but it may be doubted whether he had any friend. It may be doubted whether he had ever talked enough to any man to make that man his friend. Laurence Fitzgibbon tried him for one season, and after a month or two asked for a loan of a few hundred pounds. “I never lend money to any one under any circumstances,” said Mr. Kennedy, and it was the longest speech which had ever fallen from

his mouth in the hearing of Laurence Fitzgibbon. But though he would not lend money, he gave a great deal,—and he would give it for almost every object. "Mr. Robert Kennedy, M.P., Loughlinter, £105," appeared on almost every charitable list that was advertised. No one ever spoke to him as to this expenditure, nor did he ever speak to any one. Circulars came to him and the cheques were returned. The duty was a very easy one to him, and he performed it willingly. Had any amount of inquiry been necessary, it is possible that the labour would have been too much for him. Such was Mr. Robert Kennedy, as to whom Phineas had heard that he had during the last winter entertained Lord Brentford and Lady Laura, with very many other people of note, at his place in Perthshire.

"I very much prefer the monkey," said Phineas to Miss Fitzgibbon.

"I thought you would," said she. "Like to like, you know. You have both of you the same aptitude for climbing. But the monkeys never fall, they tell me."

Phineas, knowing that he could gain nothing by sparring with Miss Fitzgibbon, raised his hat and took his leave. Going out of a narrow gate he found himself again brought into contact with Mr. Kennedy. "What a crowd there is here," he said, finding himself bound to say something. Mr. Kennedy, who was behind him, answered him not a word. Then Phineas made up his mind that Mr. Kennedy was insolent with the insolence of riches, and that he would hate Mr. Kennedy.

He was engaged to dine on this Sunday with Mr. Low, the barrister, with whom he had been reading for the last three years. Mr. Low had taken a strong liking to Phineas, as had also Mrs. Low, and the tutor had more than once told his pupil that success in his profession was certainly open to him if he would only stick to his work. Mr. Low was himself an ambitious man, looking forward to entering Parliament at some future time, when the exigencies of his life of labour might enable him to do so; but he was prudent, given to close calculation, and resolved to make the ground sure beneath his feet in every step that he took forward. When he first heard that Finn intended to stand for Loughshane he was stricken with dismay, and strongly dissuaded him. "The electors may probably reject him. That's his only chance now," Mr. Low had said to his wife, when he found that Phineas was, as he thought, foolhardy. But the electors of Loughshane had not rejected Mr. Low's pupil, and Mr. Low was now called upon to advise what Phineas should do in his present circumstances. There is nothing to prevent the work of a Chancery barrister being done by a member of Parliament. Indeed, the most successful barristers are members of Parliament. But Phineas Finn was beginning at the wrong end, and Mr. Low knew that no good would come of it.

"Only think of your being in Parliament, Mr. Finn," said Mrs. Low.

"It is wonderful, isn't it?" said Phineas.

"It took us so much by surprise!" said Mrs. Low. "As a rule one never hears of a barrister going into Parliament till after he's forty."

"And I'm only twenty-five. I do feel that I've disgraced myself. I do, indeed, Mrs. Low."

"No;—you've not disgraced yourself, Mr. Finn. The only question is, whether it's prudent. I hope it will all turn out for the best, most heartily." Mrs. Low was a very matter-of-fact lady, four or five years older than her husband, who had had a little money of her own, and was possessed of every virtue under the sun. Nevertheless she did not quite like the idea of her husband's pupil having got into Parliament. If her husband and Phineas Finn were dining anywhere together, Phineas, who had come to them quite a boy, would walk out of the room before her husband. This could hardly be right! Nevertheless she helped Phineas to the nicest bit of fish she could find, and had he been ill, would have nursed him with the greatest care.

After dinner, when Mrs. Low had gone upstairs, there came the great discussion between the tutor and the pupil, for the sake of which this little dinner had been given. When Phineas had last been with Mr. Low,—on the occasion of his showing himself at his tutor's chambers after his return from Ireland,—he had not made up his mind so thoroughly on certain points as he had done since he had seen Lady Laura. The discussion could hardly be of any avail now,—but it could not be avoided.

"Well, Phineas, and what do you mean to do?" said Mr. Low. Everybody who knew our hero, or nearly everybody, called him by his Christian name. There are men who seem to be so treated by general consent in all societies. Even Mrs. Low, who was very prosaic, and unlikely to be familiar in her mode of address, had fallen into the way of doing it before the election. But she had dropped it, when the Phineas whom she used to know became a member of Parliament.

"That's the question;—isn't it?" said Phineas.

"Of course you'll stick to your work?"

"What;—to the Bar?"

"Yes;—to the Bar."

"I am not thinking of giving it up permanently."

"Giving it up," said Mr. Low, raising his hands in surprise. "If you give it up, how do you intend to live? Men are not paid for being members of Parliament."

"Not exactly. But, as I said before, I am not thinking of giving it up,—permanently."

"You mustn't give it up at all,—not for a day; that is, if you ever mean to do any good."

"There I think that perhaps you may be wrong, Low!"

"How can I be wrong? Did a period of idleness ever help a man

in any profession? And is it not acknowledged by all who know anything about it, that continuous labour is more necessary in our profession than in any other?"

"I do not mean to be idle."

"What is it you do mean, Phineas?"

"Why simply this. Here I am in Parliament. We must take that as fact."

"I don't doubt the fact."

"And if it be a misfortune, we must make the best of it. Even you wouldn't advise me to apply for the Chiltern Hundreds at once."

"I would;—to-morrow. My dear fellow, though I do not like to give you pain, if you come to me I can only tell you what I think. My advice to you is to give it up to-morrow. Men would laugh at you for a few weeks, but that is better than being ruined for life."

"I can't do that," said Phineas, sadly.

"Very well;—then let us go on," said Mr. Low. "If you won't give up your seat, the next best thing will be to take care that it shall interfere as little as possible with your work. I suppose you must sit upon some Committees."

"My idea is this,—that I will give up one year to learning the practices of the House."

"And do nothing?"

"Nothing but that. Why, the thing is a study in itself. As for learning it in a year, that is out of the question. But I am convinced that if a man intends to be a useful member of Parliament, he should make a study of it."

"And how do you mean to live in the meantime?" Mr. Low, who was an energetic man, had assumed almost an angry tone of voice. Phineas for a while sat silent;—not that he felt himself to be without words for a reply, but that he was thinking in what fewest words he might best convey his ideas. "You have a very modest allowance from your father, on which you have never been able to keep yourself free from debt," continued Mr. Low.

"He has increased it."

"And will it satisfy you to live here, in what will turn out to be parliamentary club idleness, on the savings of his industrious life? I think you will find yourself unhappy if you do that. Phineas, my dear fellow, as far as I have as yet been able to see the world, men don't begin either very good or very bad. They have generally good aspirations with infirm purposes;—or, as we may say, strong bodies with weak legs to carry them. Then, because their legs are weak, they drift into idleness and ruin. During all this drifting they are wretched, and when they have thoroughly drifted, they are still wretched. The agony of their old disappointment still clings to them. In nine cases out of ten it is some one small unfortunate event that puts a man astray at first. He sees some woman and loses himself

with her;—or he is taken to a racecourse and unluckily wins money;—or some devil in the shape of a friend lures him to tobacco and brandy. Your temptation has come in the shape of this accursed seat in Parliament." Mr. Low had never said a soft word in his life to any woman but the wife of his bosom, had never seen a racehorse, always confined himself to two glasses of port after dinner, and looked upon smoking as the darkest of all the vices.

" You have made up your mind, then, that I mean to be idle?"

" I have made up my mind that your time will be wholly unprofitable,—if you do as you say you intend to do."

" But you do not know my plan;—just listen to me." Then Mr. Low did listen, and Phineas explained his plan,—saying, of course, nothing of his love for Lady Laura, but giving Mr. Low to understand that he intended to assist in turning out the existing Government and to mount up to some seat,—a humble seat at first,—on the Treasury bench, by the help of his exalted friends and by the use of his own gifts of eloquence. Mr. Low heard him without a word. " Of course," said Phineas, " after the first year my time will not be fully employed, unless I succeed. And if I fail totally,—for, of course, I may fail altogether——"

" It is possible," said Mr. Low.

" If you are resolved to turn yourself against me, I must not say another word," said Phineas, with anger.

" Turn myself against you! I would turn myself any way so that I might save you from the sort of life which you are preparing for yourself. I see nothing in it that can satisfy any manly heart. Even if you are successful, what are you to become? You will be the creature of some minister; not his colleague. You are to make your way up the ladder by pretending to agree whenever agreement is demanded from you, and by voting whether you agree or do not. And what is to be your reward? Some few precarious hundreds a year, lasting just so long as a party may remain in power and you can retain a seat in Parliament! It is at the best slavery and degradation,—even if you are lucky enough to achieve the slavery."

" You yourself hope to go into Parliament and join a ministry some day," said Phineas.

Mr. Low was not quick to answer, but he did answer at last. " That is true, though I have never told you so. Indeed, it is hardly true to say that I hope it. I have my dreams, and sometimes dare to tell myself that they may possibly become waking facts. But if ever I sit on a Treasury bench I shall sit there by special invitation, having been summoned to take a high place because of my professional success. It is but a dream after all, and I would not have you repeat what I have said to any one. I had no intention to talk about myself."

" I am sure that you will succeed," said Phineas.

" Yes;—I shall succeed. I am succeeding. I live upon what I

earn, like a gentleman, and can already afford to be indifferent to work that I dislike. After all, the other part of it,—that of which I dream,—is but an unnecessary adjunct; the gilding on the gingerbread. I am inclined to think that the cake is more wholesome without it."

Phineas did not go upstairs into Mrs. Low's drawing-room on that evening, nor did he stay very late with Mr. Low. He had heard enough of counsel to make him very unhappy,—to shake from him much of the audacity which he had acquired for himself during his morning's walk,—and to make him almost doubt whether, after all, the Chiltern Hundreds would not be for him the safest escape from his difficulties. But in that case he must never venture to see Lady Laura Standish again.

CHAPTER VI.

LORD BRENTFORD'S DINNER.

No;—in such case as that,—should he resolve upon taking the advice of his old friend Mr. Low, Phineas Finn must make up his mind never to see Lady Laura Standish again! And he was in love with Lady Laura Standish;—and, for aught he knew, Lady Laura Standish might be in love with him. As he walked home from Mr. Low's house in Bedford Square, he was by no means a triumphant man. There had been much more said between him and Mr. Low than could be laid before the reader in the last chapter. Mr. Low had urged him again and again, and had prevailed so far that Phineas, before he left the house, had promised to consider that suicidal expedient of the Chiltern Hundreds. What a by-word he would become if he were to give up Parliament, having sat there for about a week. But such immediate giving up was one of the necessities of Mr. Low's programme. According to Mr. Low's teaching, a single year passed amidst the miasma of the House of Commons would be altogether fatal to any chance of professional success. And Mr. Low had at any rate succeeded in making Phineas believe that he was right in this lesson. There was his profession, as to which Mr. Low assured him that success was within his reach; and there was Parliament on the other side, as to which he knew that the chances were all against him, in spite of his advantage of a seat. That he could not combine the two, beginning with Parliament, he did believe. Which should it be? That was the question which he tried to decide as he walked home from Bedford Square to Great Marlborough Street. He could not answer the question satisfactorily, and went to bed an unhappy man.

He must at any rate go to Lord Brentford's dinner on Wednesday, and, to enable him to join in the conversation there, must attend the debates on Monday and Tuesday. The reader may perhaps be best made to understand how terrible was our hero's state of doubt by

being told that for awhile he thought of absenting himself from these debates, as being likely to weaken his purpose of withdrawing altogether from the House. It is not very often that so strong a fury rages between party and party at the commencement of the session that a division is taken upon the Address. It is customary for the leader of the opposition on such occasions to express his opinion in the most courteous language, that his right honourable friend, sitting opposite to him on the Treasury bench, has been, is, and will be wrong in everything that he thinks, says, or does in public life; but that, as anything like factious opposition is never adopted on that side of the House, the Address to the Queen, in answer to that most fatuous speech which has been put into her Majesty's gracious mouth, shall be allowed to pass unquestioned. Then the leader of the House thanks his adversary for his consideration, explains to all men how happy the country ought to be that the Government has not fallen into the disgracefully incapable hands of his right honourable friend opposite; and after that the Address is carried amidst universal serenity. But such was not the order of the day on the present occasion. Mr. Mildmay, the veteran leader of the liberal side of the House, had moved an amendment to the Address, and had urged upon the House, in very strong language, the expediency of showing, at the very commencement of the session, that the country had returned to Parliament a strong majority determined not to put up with Conservative inactivity. "I conceive it to be my duty," Mr. Mildmay had said, "at once to assume that the country is unwilling that the right honourable gentlemen opposite should keep their seats on the bench upon which they sit, and in the performance of that duty I am called upon to divide the House upon the Address to her Majesty." And if Mr. Mildmay used strong language, the reader may be sure that Mr. Mildmay's followers used language much stronger. And Mr. Daubeny, who was the present leader of the House, and representative there of the Ministry,—Lord De Terrier, the Premier, sitting in the House of Lords,—was not the man to allow these amenities to pass by without adequate replies. He and his friends were very strong in sarcasm, if they failed in argument, and lacked nothing for words, though it might perhaps be proved that they were short in numbers. It was considered that the speech in which Mr. Daubeny reviewed the long political life of Mr. Mildmay, and showed that Mr. Mildmay had been at one time a bugbear, and then a nightmare, and latterly simply a fungus, was one of the severest attacks, if not the most severe, that had been heard in that House since the Reform Bill. Mr. Mildmay, the while, was sitting with his hat low down over his eyes, and many men said that he did not like it. But this speech was not made till after that dinner at Lord Brentford's, of which a short account must be given.

Had it not been for the overwhelming interest of the doings in
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Parliament at the commencement of the session, Phineas might have perhaps abstained from attending, in spite of the charm of novelty. For, in truth, Mr. Low's words had moved him much. But if it was to be his fate to be a member of Parliament only for ten days, surely it would be well that he should take advantage of the time to hear such a debate as this. It would be a thing to talk of to his children in twenty years' time, or to his grandchildren in fifty;—and it would be essentially necessary that he should be able to talk of it to Lady Laura Standish. He did, therefore, sit in the House till one on the Monday night, and till two on the Tuesday night, and heard the debate adjourned till the Thursday. On the Thursday Mr. Daubeny was to make his great speech, and then the division would come.

When Phineas entered Lady Laura's drawing-room on the Wednesday before dinner, he found the other guests all assembled. Why men should have been earlier in keeping their dinner engagements on that day than on any other he did not understand; but it was the fact, probably, that the great anxiety of the time made those who were at all concerned in the matter very keen to hear and to be heard. During these days everybody was in a hurry,—everybody was eager; and there was a common feeling that not a minute was to be lost. There were three ladies in the room,—Lady Laura, Miss Fitzgibbon, and Mrs. Bonteen. The latter was the wife of a gentleman who had been a former Lord of the Admiralty in the late Government, and who lived in the expectation of filling, perhaps, some higher office in the government which, as he hoped, was soon to be called into existence. There were five gentlemen besides Phineas Finn himself,—Mr. Bonteen, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Fitzgibbon, Barrington Erle, who had been caught in spite of all that Lady Laura had said as to the difficulty of such an operation, and Lord Brentford. Phineas was quick to observe that every male guest was in Parliament, and to tell himself that he would not have been there unless he also had had a seat.

"We are all here now," said the Earl, ringing the bell.

"I hope I've not kept you waiting," said Phineas.

"Not at all," said Lady Laura. "I do not know why we are in such a hurry. And how many do you say it will be, Mr. Finn?"

"Seventeen, I suppose," said Phineas.

"More likely twenty-two," said Mr. Bonteen. "There is Colcleugh so ill they can't possibly bring him up, and young Rochester is at Vienna, and Gunning is sulking about something, and Moody has lost his eldest son. By George! they pressed him to come up, although Frank Moody won't be buried till Friday."

"I don't believe it," said Lord Brentford.

"You ask some of the Carlton fellows, and they'll own it."

"If I'd lost every relation I had in the world," said Fitzgibbon,

"I'd vote on such a question as this. Staying away won't bring poor Frank Moody back to life."

"But there's a decency in these matters, is there not, Mr. Fitzgibbon?" said Lady Laura.

"I thought they had thrown all that kind of thing overboard long ago," said Miss Fitzgibbon. "It would be better that they should have no veil, than squabble about the thickness of it."

Then dinner was announced. The Earl walked off with Miss Fitzgibbon, Barrington Erle took Mrs. Bonteen, and Mr. Fitzgibbon took Lady Laura.

"I'll bet four pounds to two it's over nineteen," said Mr. Bonteen, as he passed through the drawing-room door. The remark seemed to have been addressed to Mr. Kennedy, and Phineas therefore made no reply.

"I daresay it will," said Kennedy, "but I never bet."

"But you vote,—sometimes, I hope," said Bonteen.

"Sometimes," said Mr. Kennedy.

"I think he is the most odious man that ever I set my eyes on," said Phineas to himself as he followed Mr. Kennedy into the dining-room. He had observed that Mr. Kennedy had been standing very near to Lady Laura in the drawing-room, and that Lady Laura had said a few words to him. He was more determined than ever that he would hate Mr. Kennedy, and would probably have been moody and unhappy throughout the whole dinner had not Lady Laura called him to a chair at her left hand. It was very generous of her; and the more so, as Mr. Kennedy had, in a half-hesitating manner, prepared to seat himself in that very place. As it was, Phineas and Mr. Kennedy were neighbours, but Phineas had the place of honour.

"I suppose you will not speak during the debate?" said Lady Laura.

"Who? I? Certainly not. In the first place, I could not get a hearing, and, in the next place, I should not think of commencing on such an occasion. I do not know that I shall ever speak at all."

"Indeed you will. You are just the sort of man who will succeed with the House. What I doubt is, whether you will do as well in office."

"I wish I might have the chance."

"Of course you can have the chance if you try for it. Beginning so early, and being on the right side,—and, if you will allow me to say so, among the right set,—there can be no doubt that you may take office if you will. But I am not sure that you will be tractable. You cannot begin, you know, by being Prime Minister."

"I have seen enough to realise that already," said Phineas.

"If you will only keep that little fact steadily before your eyes, there is nothing you may not reach in official life. But Pitt was Prime Minister at four-and-twenty, and that precedent has ruined half our young politicians."

"It has not affected me, Lady Laura."

"As far as I can see, there is no great difficulty in government. A man must learn to have words at command when he is upon his legs in the House of Commons, in the same way as he would if he were talking to his own servants. He must keep his temper; and he must be very patient. As far as I have seen Cabinet Ministers, they are not more clever than other people."

"I think there are generally one or two men of ability in the Cabinet."

"Yes, of fair ability. Mr. Mildmay is a good specimen. There is not, and never was, anything brilliant in him. He is not eloquent, nor, as far as I am aware, did he ever create anything. But he has always been a steady, honest, persevering man, and circumstances have made politics come easy to him."

"Think of the momentous questions which he has been called upon to decide," said Phineas.

"Every question so handled by him has been decided rightly according to his own party, and wrongly according to the party opposite. A political leader is so sure of support and so sure of attack, that it is hardly necessary for him to be even anxious to be right. For the country's sake, he should have officials under him who know the routine of business."

"You think very badly then of politics as a profession."

"No; I think of them very highly. It must be better to deal with the repealing of laws than the defending of criminals. But all this is papa's wisdom, not mine. Papa has never been in the Cabinet yet, and therefore of course he is a little caustic."

"I think he was quite right," said Barrington Erle stoutly. He spoke so stoutly that everybody at the table listened to him.

"I don't exactly see the necessity for such internecine war just at present," said Lord Brentford.

"I must say I do," said the other. "Lord De Terrier took office knowing that he was in a minority. We had a fair majority of nearly thirty when he came in."

"Then how very soft you must have been to go out," said Miss Fitzgibbon.

"Not in the least soft," continued Barrington Erle. "We could not command our men, and were bound to go out. For aught we know, some score of them might have chosen to support Lord De Terrier, and then we should have owned ourselves beaten for the time."

"You were beaten,—hollow," said Miss Fitzgibbon.

"Then why did Lord De Terrier dissolve?"

"A Prime Minister is quite right to dissolve in such a position," said Lord Brentford. "He must do so for the Queen's sake. It is his only chance."

"Just so. It is, as you say, his only chance, and it is his right. His very possession of power will give him near a score of votes, and if he thinks that he has a chance, let him try it. We maintain that he had no chance, and that he must have known that he had none;—that if he could not get on with the late House, he certainly could not get on with a new House. We let him have his own way as far as we could in February. We had failed last summer, and if he could get along he was welcome. But he could not get along."

"I must say I think he was right to dissolve," said Lady Laura.

"And we are right to force the consequences upon him as quickly as we can. He practically lost nine seats by his dissolution. Look at Loughshane."

"Yes; look at Loughshane," said Miss Fitzgibbon. "The country at any rate has gained something there."

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good, Mr. Finn," said the Earl.

"What on earth is to become of poor George?" said Mr. Fitzgibbon, "I wonder whether any one knows where he is. George wasn't a bad sort of fellow."

"Roby used to think that he was a very bad fellow," said Mr. Bondeen. "Roby used to swear that it was hopeless trying to catch him." It may be as well to explain that Mr. Roby was a Conservative gentleman of great fame who had for years acted as Whip under Mr. Daubeny, and who now filled the high office of Patronage Secretary to the Treasury. "I believe in my heart," continued Mr. Bondeen, "that Roby is rejoiced that poor George Morris should be out in the cold."

"If seats were halveable, he should share mine, for the sake of auld lang syne," said Laurence Fitzgibbon.

"But not to-morrow night," said Barrington Erle; "the division to-morrow will be a thing not to be joked with. Upon my word I think they're right about old Moody. All private considerations should give way. And as for Gunning, I'd have him up or I'd know the reason why."

"And shall we have no defaulters, Barrington?" asked Lady Laura.

"I'm not going to boast, but I don't know of one for whom we need blush. Sir Everard Powell is so bad with gout that he can't even bear any one to look at him, but Ratler says that he'll bring him up." Mr. Ratler was in those days the Whip on the liberal side of the House.

"Unfortunate wretch!" said Miss Fitzgibbon.

"The worst of it is that he screams in his paroxysms," said Mr. Bondeen.

"And you mean to say that you'll take him into the lobby," said Lady Laura.

"Undoubtedly," said Barrington Erle. "Why not? He has no business with a seat if he can't vote. But Sir Everard is a good man, and he'll be there if laudanum and bath-chair make it possible."

The same kind of conversation went on during the whole of dinner, and became, if anything, more animated when the three ladies had left the room. Mr. Kennedy made but one remark, and then he observed that as far as he could see a majority of nineteen would be as serviceable as a majority of twenty. This he said in a very mild voice, and in a tone that was intended to be expressive of doubt; but in spite of his humility Barrington Erle flew at him almost savagely,—as though a liberal member of the House of Commons was disgraced by so mean a spirit; and Phineas found himself despising the man for his want of zeal.

"If we are to beat them, let us beat them well," said Phineas.

"Let there be no doubt about it," said Barrington Erle.

"I should like to see every man with a seat polled," said Bonteen.

"Poor Sir Everard!" said Lord Brentford. "It will kill him, no doubt, but I suppose the seat is safe."

"Oh, yes; Llanwrwst is quite safe," said Barrington, in his eagerness omitting to catch Lord Brentford's grim joke.

Phineas went up into the drawing-room for a few minutes after dinner, and was eagerly desirous of saying a few more words,—he knew not what words,—to Lady Laura. Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Bonteen had left the dining-room first, and Phineas again found Mr. Kennedy standing close to Lady Laura's shoulder. Could it be possible that there was anything in it? Mr. Kennedy was an unmarried man, with an immense fortune, a magnificent place, a seat in Parliament, and was not perhaps above forty years of age. There could be no reason why he should not ask Lady Laura to be his wife,—except, indeed, that he did not seem to have sufficient words at command to ask anybody for anything. But could it be that such a woman as Lady Laura could accept such a man as Mr. Kennedy because of his wealth, and because of his fine place,—a man who had not a word to throw to a dog, who did not seem to be possessed of an idea, who hardly looked like a gentleman;—so Phineas told himself. But in truth Mr. Kennedy, though he was a plain, unattractive man, with nothing in his personal appearance to call for remark, was not unlike a gentleman in his usual demeanour. Phineas himself, it may be here said, was six feet high, and very handsome, with bright blue eyes, and brown wavy hair, and light silken beard. Mrs. Low had told her husband more than once that he was much too handsome to do any good. Mr. Low, however, had replied that young Finn had never shown himself to be conscious of his own personal advantages. "He'll learn it soon enough," said Mrs. Low. "Some woman will tell him, and then he'll be spoilt." I do not think that Phineas depended much as yet on his own good looks, but he felt that Mr.

Kennedy ought to be despised by such a one as Lady Laura Standish, because his looks were not good. And she must despise him! It could not be that a woman so full of life should be willing to put up with a man who absolutely seemed to have no life within him. And yet why was he there, and why was he allowed to hang about just over her shoulders? Phineas Finn began to feel himself to be an injured man.

But Lady Laura had the power of dispelling instantly this sense of injury. She had done it effectually in the dining-room by calling him to the seat by her side, to the express exclusion of the millionaire, and she did it again now by walking away from Mr. Kennedy to the spot on which Phineas had placed himself somewhat sulkily.

"Of course you'll be at the club on Friday morning after the division," she said.

"No doubt."

"When you leave it, come and tell me what are your impressions, and what you think of Mr. Daubeny's speech. There'll be nothing done in the House before four, and you'll be able to run up to me."

"Certainly I will."

"I have asked Mr. Kennedy to come, and Mr. Fitzgibbon. I am so anxious about it, that I want to hear what different people say. You know, perhaps, that papa is to be in the Cabinet if there's a change."

"Is he indeed?"

"Oh, yes;—and you'll come up?"

"Of course I will. Do you expect to hear much of an opinion from Mr. Kennedy?"

"Yes I do. You don't quite know Mr. Kennedy yet. And you must remember that he will say more to me than he will to you. He's not quick, you know, as you are, and has no enthusiasm on any subject;—but he has opinions, and sound opinions too." Phineas felt that Lady Laura was in a slight degree scolding him for the disrespectful manner in which he had spoken of Mr. Kennedy; and he felt also that he had committed himself,—that he had shown himself to be sore, and that she had seen and understood his soreness.

"The truth is I do not know him," said he, trying to correct his blunder.

"No;—not as yet. But I hope that you may some day, as he is one of those men who are both useful and estimable."

"I do not know that I can use him," said Phineas; "but, if you wish it, I will endeavour to esteem him."

"I wish you to do both;—but that will all come in due time. I think it probable that in the early autumn there will be a great gathering of the real Whig Liberals at Loughlinter;—of those, I mean, who have their heart in it, and are at the same time gentlemen. If it is so, I should be sorry that you should not be there. You need not

mention it, but Mr. Kennedy has just said a word about it to papa, and a word from him always means so much ! Well ;—good-night ; and mind you come up on Friday. You are going to the club now, of course. I envy you men your clubs more than I do the House ;—though I feel that a woman's life is only half a life, as she cannot have a seat in Parliament."

Then Phineas went away, and walked down to Pall Mall with Laurence Fitzgibbon. He would have preferred to take his walk alone, but he could not get rid of his affectionate countryman. He wanted to think over what had taken place during the evening ; and, indeed, he did do so in spite of his friend's conversation. Lady Laura, when she first saw him after his return to London, had told him how anxious her father was to congratulate him on his seat, but the Earl had not spoken a word to him on the subject. The Earl had been courteous, as hosts customarily are, but had been in no way specially kind to him. And then Mr. Kennedy ! As to going to Loughlinter, he would not do such a thing,—not though the success of the liberal party were to depend on it. He declared to himself that there were some things which a man could not do. But although he was not altogether satisfied with what had occurred in Portman Square, he felt as he walked down arm-in-arm with Fitzgibbon that Mr. Low and Mr. Low's counsels must be scattered to the winds. He had thrown the die in consenting to stand for Loughshane, and must stand the hazard of the cast.

" Bedad, Phin, my boy, I don't think you're listening to me at all," said Laurence Fitzgibbon.

" I'm listening to every word you say," said Phineas.

" And if I have to go down to the ould country again this session, you'll go with me ? "

" If I can I will."

" That's my boy ! And it's I that hope you'll have the chance. What's the good of turning these fellows out if one isn't to get something for one's trouble ? "

CHAPTER VII.

MR. AND MRS. BUNCE.

It was three o'clock on the Thursday night before Mr. Daubeny's speech was finished. I do not think that there was any truth in the allegation made at the time, that he continued on his legs an hour longer than the necessities of his speech required, in order that five or six very ancient Whigs might be wearied out and shrink to their beds. Let a Whig have been ever so ancient and ever so weary, he would not have been allowed to depart from Westminster Hall that night. —Sir Everard Powell was there in his bath-chair at twelve,

with a doctor on one side of him and a friend on the other, in some purlieu of the House, and did his duty like a fine old Briton as he was. That speech of Mr. Daubeny's will never be forgotten by any one who heard it. Its studied bitterness had perhaps never been equalled, and yet not a word was uttered for the saying of which he could be accused of going beyond the limits of parliamentary antagonism. It is true that personalities could not have been closer, that accusations of political dishonesty and of almost worse than political cowardice and falsehood could not have been clearer, that no words in the language could have attributed meaner motives or more unscrupulous conduct. But, nevertheless, Mr. Daubeny in all that he said was parliamentary, and showed himself to be a gladiator thoroughly well trained for the arena in which he had descended to the combat. His arrows were poisoned, and his lance was barbed, and his shot was heated red,—because such things are allowed. He did not poison his enemies' wells or use Greek fire, because those things are not allowed. He knew exactly the rules of the combat. Mr. Mildmay sat and heard him without once raising his hat from his brow, or speaking a word to his neighbour. Men on both sides of the House said that Mr. Mildmay suffered terribly; but as Mr. Mildmay uttered no word of complaint to any one, and was quite ready to take Mr. Daubeny by the hand the next time they met in company, I do not know that any one was able to form a true idea of Mr. Mildmay's feelings. Mr. Mildmay was an impassive man who rarely spoke of his own feelings, and no doubt sat with his hat low down over his eyes in order that no man might judge of them on that occasion by the impression on his features. "If he could have left off half an hour earlier it would have been perfect as an attack," said Barrington Erle in criticising Mr. Daubeny's speech, "but he allowed himself to sink into comparative weakness, and the glory of it was over before the end."—Then came the division. The Liberals had 333 votes to 314 for the Conservatives, and therefore counted a majority of 19. It was said that so large a number of members had never before voted at any division.

"I own I'm disappointed," said Barrington Erle to Mr. Ratler.

"I thought there would be twenty," said Mr. Ratler. "I never went beyond that. I knew they would have old Moody up, but I thought Gunning would have been too hard for them."

"They say they've promised them both peerages."

"Yes ;—if they remain in. But they know they're going out."

"They must go, with such a majority against them," said Barrington Erle.

"Of course they must," said Mr. Ratler. "Lord De Terrier wants nothing better, but it is rather hard upon poor Daubeny. I never saw such an unfortunate old Tantalus."

"He gets a good drop of real water now and again, and I don't pity

him in the least. He's clever of course, and has made his own way, but I've always a feeling that he has no business where he is. I suppose we shall know all about it at Brooks's by one o'clock to-morrow."

Phineas, though it had been past five before he went to bed,—for there had been much triumphant talking to be done among liberal members after the division,—was up at his breakfast at Mrs. Bunce's lodgings by nine. There was a matter which he was called upon to settle immediately in which Mrs. Bunce herself was much interested, and respecting which he had promised to give an answer on this very morning. A set of very dingy chambers up two pairs of stairs at No. 9, Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, to which Mr. Low had recommended him to transfer himself and all his belongings, were waiting his occupation, should he resolve upon occupying them. If he intended to commence operations as a barrister, it would be necessary that he should have chambers and a clerk; and before he had left Mr. Low's house on Sunday evening he had almost given that gentleman authority to secure for him these rooms at No. 9. "Whether you remain in Parliament or no, you must make a beginning," Mr. Low had said; "and how are you ever to pretend to begin if you don't have chambers?" Mr. Low hoped that he might be able to wean Phineas away from his Parliament bauble;—that he might induce the young barrister to give up his madness, if not this session or the next, at any rate before a third year had commenced. Mr. Low was a persistent man, liking very much when he did like, and loving very strongly when he did love. He would have many a tug for Phineas Finn before he would allow that false Westminster Satan to carry off the prey as altogether his own. If he could only get Phineas into the dingy chambers he might do much!

But Phineas had now become so imbued with the atmosphere of politics, had been so breathed upon by Lady Laura and Barrington Erle, that he could no longer endure the thought of any other life than that of a life spent among the lobbies. A desire to help to beat the Conservatives had fastened on his very soul, and almost made Mr. Low odious in his eyes. He was afraid of Mr. Low, and for the nonce would not go to him any more;—but he must see the porter at Lincoln's Inn, he must write a line to Mr. Low, and he must tell Mrs. Bunce that for the present he would still keep on her rooms. His letter to Mr. Low was as follows:—

"Great Marlborough Street, May, 186—.

"MY DEAR LOW,

"I have made up my mind against taking the chambers, and am now off to the Inn to say that I shall not want them. Of course, I know what you will think of me, and it is very grievous to me to have to bear the hard judgment of a man whose opinion I value so

highly; but, in the teeth of your terribly strong arguments, I think that there is something to be said on my side of the question. This seat in Parliament has come in my way by chance, and I think it would be pusillanimous in me to reject it, feeling, as I do, that a seat in Parliament confers very great honour. I am, too, very fond of politics, and regard legislation as the finest profession going. Had I any one dependent on me, I probably might not be justified in following the bent of my inclination. But I am all alone in the world, and therefore have a right to make the attempt. If, after a trial of one or two sessions, I should fail in that which I am attempting, it will not even then be too late to go back to the better way. I can assure you that at any rate it is not my intention to be idle.

"I know very well how you will fret and fume over what I say, and how utterly I shall fail in bringing you round to my way of thinking; but as I must write to tell you of my decision, I cannot refrain from defending myself to the best of my ability.

"Yours always faithfully,

"PHINEAS FINN."

Mr. Low received this letter at his chambers, and when he had read it, he simply pressed his lips closely together, placed the sheet of paper back in its envelope, and put it into a drawer at his left hand. Having done this, he went on with what work he had before him, as though his friend's decision were a matter of no consequence to him. As far as he was concerned the thing was done, and there should be an end of it. So he told himself; but nevertheless his mind was full of it all day; and, though he wrote not a word of answer to Phineas, he made a reply within his own mind to every one of the arguments used in the letter. "Great honours! How can there be honour in what comes, as he says, by chance? He hasn't sense enough to understand that the honour comes from the mode of winning it, and from the mode of wearing it; and that the very fact of his being member for Loughshane at this instant simply proves that Loughshane should have had no privilege to return a member! No one dependent on him! Are not his father and his mother and his sisters dependent on him as long as he must eat their bread till he can earn bread of his own? He will never earn bread of his own. He will always be eating bread that others have earned." In this way, before the day was over, Mr. Low became very angry, and swore to himself that he would have nothing more to say to Phineas Finn. But yet he found himself creating plans for encountering and conquering the parliamentary fiend who was at present so cruelly potent with his pupil. It was not till the third evening that he told his wife that Finn had made up his mind not to take chambers. "Then I would have nothing more to say to him," said Mrs. Low, savagely. "For the present I can have nothing more to say to him." "But neither

now nor ever," said Mrs. Low, with great emphasis ; " he has been false to you." "No," said Mr. Low, who was a man thoroughly and thoughtfully just at all points ; " he has not been false to me. He has always meant what he has said, when he was saying it. But he is weak and blind, and flies like a moth to the candle ; one pities the poor moth, and would save him a stump of his wing if it be possible."

Phineas, when he had written his letter to Mr Low, started off for Lincoln's Inn, making his way through the well-known dreary streets of Soho, and through St. Giles's to Long Acre. He knew every corner well, for he had walked the same road almost daily for the last three years. He had conceived a liking for the route, which he might easily have changed without much addition to the distance, by passing through Oxford Street and Holborn ; but there was an air of business on which he prided himself in going by the most direct passage, and he declared to himself very often that things dreary and dingy to the eye might be good in themselves. Lincoln's Inn itself is dingy, and the Law Courts therein are perhaps the meanest in which Equity ever disclosed herself. Mr. Low's three rooms in the Old Square, each of them brown with the binding of law books and with the dust collected on law papers, and with furniture that had been brown always, and had become browner with years, were perhaps as unattractive to the eye of a young pupil as any rooms which were ever entered. And the study of the Chancery law itself is not an alluring pursuit till the mind has come to have some insight into the beauty of its ultimate object. Phineas, during his three years' course of reasoning on these things, had taught himself to believe that things ugly on the outside might be very beautiful within ; and had therefore come to prefer crossing Poland Street and Soho Square, and so continuing his travels by the Seven Dials and Long Acre. His morning walk was of a piece with his morning studies, and he took pleasure in the gloom of both. But now the taste of his palate had been already changed by the glare of the lamps in and about palatial Westminster, and he found that St. Giles's was disagreeable. The ways about Pall Mall and across the Park to Parliament Street, or to the Treasury, were much pleasanter, and the new offices in Downing Street, already half built, absorbed all that interest which he had hitherto been able to take in the suggested but uncommenced erection of new Law Courts in the neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn. As he made his way to the porter's lodge under the great gateway of Lincoln's Inn, he told himself that he was glad that he had escaped, at any rate for a while, from a life so dull and dreary. If he could only sit in chambers at the Treasury instead of chambers in that old court, how much pleasanter it would be ! After all, as regarded that question of income, it might well be that the Treasury chambers should be the more remunerative, and the more

quickly remunerative, of the two. And, as he thought, Lady Laura might be compatible with the Treasury chambers and Parliament, but could not possibly be made compatible with Old Square, Lincoln's Inn.

But nevertheless there came upon him a feeling of sorrow when the old man at the lodge seemed to be rather glad than otherwise that he did not want the chambers. "Then Mr. Green can have them," said the porter; "that'll be good news for Mr. Green. I don't know what the gen'lemen 'll do for chambers if things goes on as they're going." Mr. Green was welcome to the chambers as far as Phineas was concerned; but Phineas felt nevertheless a certain amount of regret that he should have been compelled to abandon a thing which was regarded both by the porter and by Mr. Green as being so desirable. He had however written his letter to Mr. Low, and made his promise to Barrington Erle, and was bound to Lady Laura Standish; and he walked out through the old gateway into Chancery Lane, resolving that he would not even visit Lincoln's Inn again for a year. There were certain books,—law books,—which he would read at such intervals of leisure as politics might give him; but within the precincts of the Inns of Court he would not again put his foot for twelve months, let learned pundits of the law,—such for instance as Mr. and Mrs. Low,—say what they might.

He had told Mrs. Bunce, before he left his home after breakfast, that he should for the present remain under her roof. She had been much gratified, not simply because lodgings in Great Marlborough Street are less readily let than chambers in Lincoln's Inn, but also because it was a great honour to her to have a member of Parliament in her house. Members of Parliament are not so common about Oxford Street as they are in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall and St. James's Square. But Mr. Bunce, when he came to his dinner, did not join as heartily as he should have done in his wife's rejoicing. Mr. Bunce was in the employment of certain copying law-stationers in Carey Street, and had a strong belief in the law as a profession;—but he had none whatever in the House of Commons. "And he's given up going into chambers?" said Mr. Bunce to his wife.

"Given it up altogether for the present," said Mrs. Bunce.

"And he don't mean to have no clerk?" said Mr. Bunce.

"Not unless it is for his Parliament work."

"There ain't no clerks wanted for that, and what's worse, there ain't no fees to pay 'em. I'll tell you what it is, Jane;—if you don't look sharp there won't be nothing to pay you before long."

"And he in Parliament, Jacob!"

"There ain't no salary for being in Parliament. There are scores of them Parliament gents ain't got so much as 'll pay their dinners for 'em. And then if anybody does trust 'em, there's no getting at 'em to make 'em pay as there is at other folk."

"I don't know that our Mr. Phineas will ever be like that, Jacob."

"That's gammon, Jane. That's the way as women gets themselves took in always. Our Mr. Phineas! Why should our Mr. Phineas be better than anybody else?"

"He's always acted handsome, Jacob."

"There was one time he couldn't pay his lodgings for wellnigh nine months, till his governor come down with the money. I don't know whether that was handsome. It knocked me about terrible, I know."

"He always meant honest, Jacob."

"I don't know that I care much for a man's meaning when he runs short of money. How is he going to see his way, with his seat in Parliament, and this giving up of his profession? He owes us near a quarter now."

"He paid me two months this morning, Jacob; so he don't owe a farthing."

"Very well;—so much the better for us. I shall just have a few words with Mr. Low, and see what he says to it. For myself I don't think half so much of Parliament folk as some do. They're for promising everything before they's elected; but not one in twenty of 'em is as good as his word when he gets there."

Mr. Bunce was a copying journeyman, who spent ten hours a day in Carey Street with a pen between his fingers; and after that he would often spend two or three hours of the night with a pen between his fingers in Marlborough Street. He was a thoroughly hard-working man, doing pretty well in the world, for he had a good house over his head, and always could find raiment and bread for his wife and eight children; but, nevertheless, he was an unhappy man because he suffered from political grievances, or, I should more correctly say, that his grievances were semi-political and semi-social. He had no vote, not being himself the tenant of the house in Great Marlborough Street. The tenant was a tailor who occupied the shop, whereas Bunce occupied the whole of the remainder of the premises. He was a lodger, and lodgers were not as yet trusted with the franchise. And he had ideas, which he himself admitted to be very raw, as to the injustice of the manner in which he was paid for his work. So much a folio, without reference to the way in which his work was done, without regard to the success of his work, with no questions asked of himself, was, as he thought, no proper way of remunerating a man for his labours. He had long since joined a Trade Union, and for two years past had paid a subscription of a shilling a week towards its funds. He longed to be doing some battle against his superiors, and to be putting himself in opposition to his employers;—not that he objected personally to Messrs. Foolscap, Margin, and Vellum, who always made much of him as a useful man;—but because some such antagonism would be manly, and the fighting of some battle would be the right thing to do. "If Labour don't mean to go to the wall him-

self," Bunce would say to his wife, "Labour must look alive, and put somebody else there."

Mrs. Bunce was a comfortable motherly woman, who loved her husband but hated politics. As he had an aversion to his superiors in the world because they were superiors, so had she a liking for them for the same reason. She despised people poorer than herself, and thought it a fair subject for boasting that her children always had meat for dinner. If it was ever so small a morsel, she took care that they had it, in order that the boast might be maintained. The world had once or twice been almost too much for her,—when, for instance, her husband had been ill; and again, to tell the truth, for the last three months of that long period in which Phineas had omitted to pay his bills; but she had kept a fine brave heart during those troubles, and could honestly swear that the children always had a bit of meat, though she herself had been occasionally without it for days together. At such times she would be more than ordinarily meek to Mr. Margin, and especially courteous to the old lady who lodged in her first-floor drawing-room,—for Phineas lived up two pair of stairs,—and she would excuse such servility by declaring that there was no knowing how soon she might want assistance. But her husband, in such emergencies, would become furious and quarrelsome, and would declare that Labour was going to the wall, and that something very strong must be done at once. That shilling which Bunce paid weekly to the Union she regarded as being absolutely thrown away,—as much so as though he cast it weekly into the Thames. And she had told him so, over and over again, making heart-piercing allusions to the eight children and to the bit of meat. He would always endeavour to explain to her that there was no other way under the sun for keeping Labour from being sent to the wall;—but he would do so hopelessly and altogether ineffectually, and she had come to regard him as a lunatic to the extent of that one weekly shilling.

She had a woman's instinctive partiality for comeliness in a man, and was very fond of Phineas Finn because he was handsome. And now she was very proud of him because he was a member of Parliament. She had heard,—from her husband, who had told her the fact with much disgust,—that the sons of Dukes and Earls go into Parliament, and she liked to think that the fine young man to whom she talked more or less every day should sit with the sons of Dukes and Earls. When Phineas had really brought distress upon her by owing her some thirty or forty pounds, she could never bring herself to be angry with him,—because he was handsome and because he dined out with Lords. And she had triumphed greatly over her husband, who had desired to be severe upon his aristocratic debtor, when the money had all been paid in a lump.

"I don't know that he's any great catch," Bunce had said, when the prospect of their lodger's departure had been debated between them.

"Jacob," said his wife, "I don't think you feel it when you've got people respectable about you."

"The only respectable man I know," said Jacob, "is the man as earns his bread; and Mr. Finn, as I take it, is a long way from that yet."

Phineas returned to his lodgings before he went down to his club, and again told Mrs. Bunce that he had altogether made up his mind about the chambers. "If you'll keep me I shall stay here for the first session I daresay."

"Of course we shall be only too proud, Mr. Finn; and though it mayn't perhaps be quite the place for a member of Parliament——"

"But I think it is quite the place."

"It's very good of you to say so, Mr. Finn, and we'll do our very best to make you comfortable. Respectable we are, I may say; and though Bunce is a bit rough sometimes——"

"Never to me, Mrs. Bunce."

"But he is rough,—and silly, too, with his radical nonsense, paying a shilling a week to a nasty Union just for nothing. Still he means well, and there ain't a man who works harder for his wife and children ;—that I will say of him. And if he do talk politics——"

"But I like a man to talk politics, Mrs. Bunce."

"For a gentleman in Parliament of course it's proper; but I never could see what good it could do to a law-stationer; and when he talks of Labour going to the wall, I always ask him whether he didn't get his wages regular last Saturday. But, Lord love you, Mr. Finn, when a man as is a journeyman has took up politics and joined a Trade Union, he ain't no better than a milestone for his wife to take and talk to him."

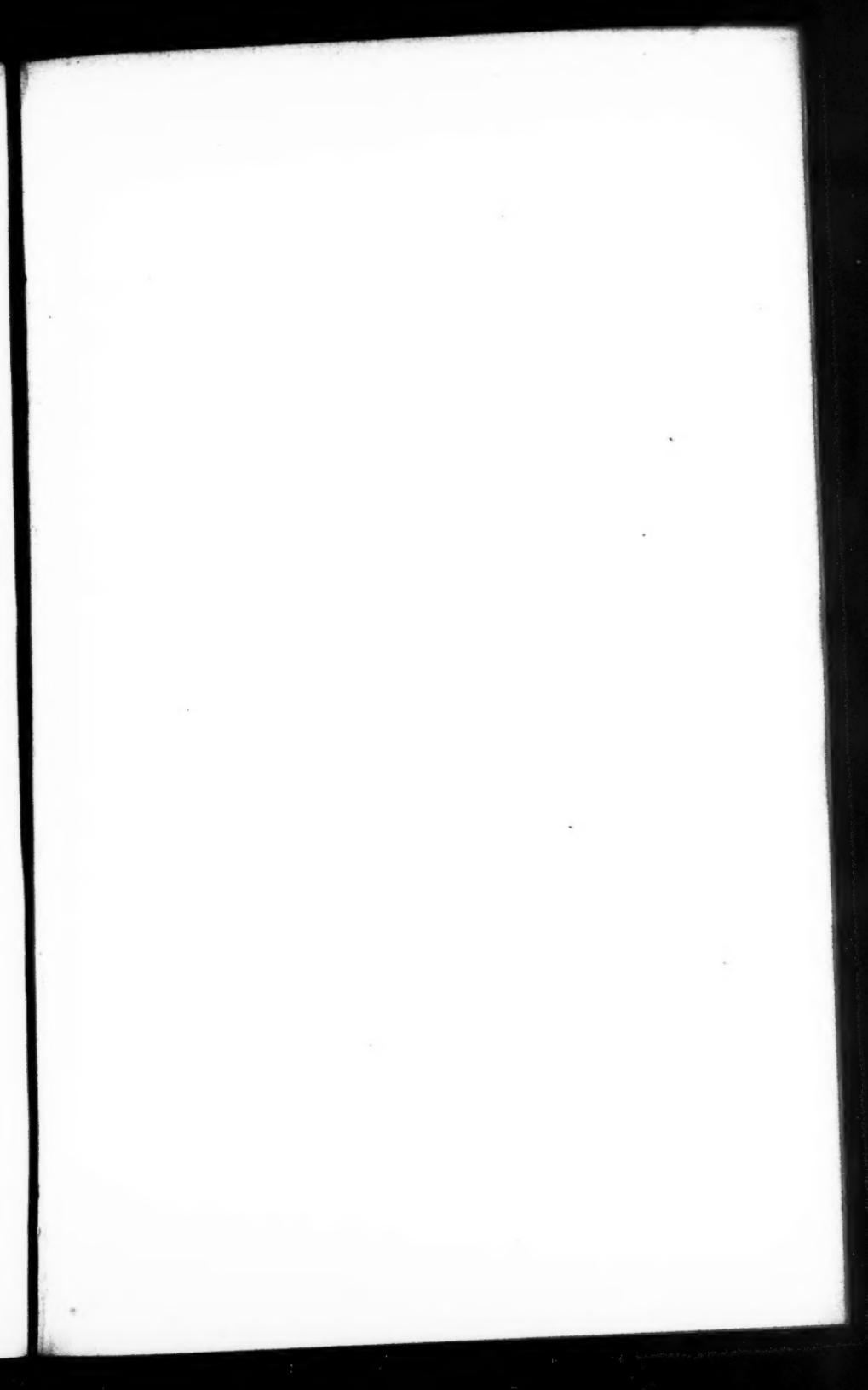
After that Phineas went down to the Reform Club, and made one of those who were buzzing there in little crowds and uttering their prophecies as to future events. Lord De Terrier was to go out. That was certain. Whether Mr. Mildmay was to come in was uncertain. That he would go to Windsor to-morrow morning was not to be doubted; but it was thought very probable that he might plead his age, and decline to undertake the responsibility of forming a Ministry.

"And what then?" said Phineas to his friend Fitzgibbon.

"Why, then there will be a choice out of three. There is the Duke, who is the most incompetent man in England; there is Monk, who is the most unfit; and there is Gresham, who is the most unpopular. I can't conceive it possible to find a worse Prime Minister than either of the three;—but the country affords no other."

"And which would Mildmay name?"

"All of them,—one after the other, so as to make the embarrassment the greater." That was Mr. Fitzgibbon's description of the crisis; but then it was understood that Mr. Fitzgibbon was given to romancing.





"I wish you would be in earnest with me."